

BOYS, READ THE RADIO ARTICLES IN THIS NUMBER

PLUCK AND LUCK

STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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THE BOY PRIVATEER CAPTAIN; OR, LOST ON A NAMELESS SEA

By CAPT THOS H. WILSON.

AND OTHER STORIES



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The Boy Privateer Captain

OR, LOST IN A NAMELESS SEA

By CAPT. THOS. H. WILSON

CHAPTER I.—An Important Message and a Daring Move.

The grand ball given by the governor of the island of Jamaica, in his official residence at Kingston to the citizens of the town, the captains and officers of the vessels then at anchor in the harbor, and to the commandant and officers of the garrison, their wives and families, was in progress, and a scene of magnificence was presented which is seldom equaled. The spacious rooms of the old mansion were brilliantly lighted, the stairway and passages were bowers of roses and palms, soft music floated upon the air from the garden where several military bands were stationed in concealed nooks, while at one end of the great ballroom a large orchestra played for the especial accommodation of the dancers.

The festivities were at their height when a young man in the dress usually worn at court in those days, the period being the year 1812, passed carelessly through an arched entrance hung with roses into a small conservatory through which one might reach the garden unnoticed. There was one small hanging lamp in the place and this light, reflected by a tiny fountain in the center, was all that it afforded. The young man passed through the little conservatory, pausing just before he reached the door leading to the garden, to look back for an instant and then to listen.

"I ought to hear to-night," he said, softly. "It will be an opportunity I may never have again if I do not. In case anything serious has happened by this time, Hal should have sailed long ago. Perhaps he would not sail until he had positive information, and of course he could not know what plans I had formed. I wonder if Derrick has yet returned?"

He opened the door and stepped out into the garden, and as he did so he heard a low whistle from behind a marble statue of Flora, standing above a mass of palms. He returned the signal, and a man in a cloak stepped out and said:

"Did you want anything, sir?"

"Where is Derrick?"

"Gone to the harbor. A vessel has been reported as in the offing."

"What did he think it was?"

"The Vigilant."

"Good. He has his orders to bring Hal to this place at once?"

"Yes, sir."

"And the men on the Sprite?"

"Half of 'em are impressed American seamen, and are with us."

"There are others in port?"

"Yes, enough to man a frigate."

"Good. Remain here and give the signal as soon as Derrick returns."

"Ay, ay, sir!" and the man returned to his hiding place.

As the young man re-entered the conservatory he saw the figure of a beautiful young girl standing in the further entrance, her form thrown into full relief by the light behind. He advanced as far as the fountain and whispered:

"Hist! Isabel!"

"Leon!" she answered, as she came swiftly forward.

"What news?" asked the young man as he held the girl in his arms.

"The governor wishes to announce my engagement to Captain Sir Alexander Havens immediately after supper."

"But you are an American, and Sir Alexander is in his majesty's service."

"I am the governor's ward, and he has the right to dispose of my hand as he wishes."

"But you do not wish to marry this coxcomb?"

"Leon!"

"I knew it; but something must be done at once. Listen. I know that we are on the eve of a war with England—it may have been already declared. I expect a commission and letters of marque at any moment, but the least delay may thwart all my plans."

"What can be done, Leon?" asked the girl. "You know that my heart is yours, that I am a true American, and that I am ready to follow you to the end of the world."

"Yes, yes, I know all, dearest, and I may put your vows to the test this very night. I may have to fly or I may go in triumph, but if you promise to be true, it can matter little what happens."

At that moment a young girl came hastily into

the darkened conservatory, looked hurriedly around, and said anxiously:

"She is not here, and yet—oh, what is to be done? The governor evidently suspects that——"

"What is it, May?" asked Isabel, coming forward.

"Ah, you are here?" cried the other. "Your guardian has sent for you. He says that you have been altogether too free with this American, and that he means to have your engagement announced at once. He suspects Leon to be a spy of the United States, and I heard him say as much to Sir Alexander."

"Then there is no time to be lost!" hissed Leon. "Ha! what is that? The signal, as I live!"

A sound as of a pebble being thrown against the glass was heard, and Leon hurried to the little door and threw it open, a young fellow of about his own age and size hurriedly entering.

"War has been declared!" he said eagerly. "I got away from the vessel in a sailboat brought out by Derrick."

"And then?"

"We took horses the instant we were on shore and rode like the wind."

"And my commission?" asked Leon, eagerly.

"I forwarded your application to Congress, and the very moment that war was declared I received the commission and the letters of marque which authorize you to carry on war privately against Great Britain, either on the high seas or in any but a neutral port."

"Just in time!" said Leon. "Isabel, my love, I ask you to follow me and share the fortunes of a privateer. Will you do it?"

"I will!" answered the brave girl. "But how shall you escape? You have no vessel, and the instant the news of war is known you will be detained."

"Not so," cried the young man. "I have conceived a bold plan, and now for its execution."

"What do you mean to do?"

"Seize one of the vessels now in the harbor, take command and wage war against the enemy."

At that moment the door was thrown open, and in rushed a grizzled seaman.

"There's not a moment to lose, captain, if we intend to make the Sprite ours!" he said, hastily. "The news will be abroad in an hour."

"To the shore!" hissed Leon. "Hal, my old friend, you shall be my lieutenant. One bold dash and the Sprite is ours."

Ten minutes later the governor's ward was missing, and the greatest consternation reigned.

vided besides with small arms for all hands and stores sufficient for a considerable cruise.

When Leon began to look around for a suitable vessel his eye soon lighted upon the Sprite, and it was not long before he knew all about her and just what chances there were of seizing her in case he determined to take that step.

The vessel lay idly at anchor in the harbor, the night was dark, there was little wind, and the waves lapped gently the sides of the Sprite as she softly rocked to and fro. There was but a small guard left on board, for many of the men had been given liberty, and the captain and all his officers were at the governor's ball, the vessel being left to take care of herself. One big fellow with a gray beard and wooden leg, the oldest man on board, sat on an overturned deck bucket up forward, and, as he puffed slowly at his pipe, would now and then cast his eyes over the rail toward the town and emit a low grunt. Ten minutes later a man came on deck, walked to the rail, looked out upon the darkness, and muttered:

"Hallo! some o' the lads must be coming. Can't be that the ball is broke up; must be the blue jackets. Hallo, mates, turn up and——"

"Stow that, you lubber!" hissed the wooden-legged man, springing suddenly to the other's side and felling him with a blow of his fist.

The outcry had been heard, however. Up came a score of men, and at the same moment two score more swarmed over the rail at several points.

"What does this mean?" demanded one of the warrant officers of the boatswain on watch as he hurriedly ran forward.

"It means that the Yankees have declared war against John Bull!" cried Bill Capstan, the one-legged boatswain, "and this is the first capture."

"Hurrah for Captain Leon, our boy commander!" shouted a score of voices.

The prisoners were sent below, the men were quickly divided into two working crews by Bill Capstan and Joe Spiegel, the young Hollander, and the work of getting the vessel under way was soon rapidly progressing.

Presently two closely veiled ladies came up the swinging companionway let down over the side and made their way to the cabin, escorted by Hal, who saluted as they disappeared, and then returned to Leon's side.

"I could not leave you, Leon," he said, "and May could not leave Isabel. We'll have a double wedding on board as soon as we can ship a parson."

"Ay, ay, my lad," answered Leon, with a light laugh. "But this is no time for jesting, Hal. We have not yet done all that I undertook to do this night. Give orders to get away from the harbor as soon as possible."

The work was done quietly and efficiently, and the Sprite had up her anchor, put on sail, and was on her way to sea before anyone on the other vessels in the harbor suspected that anything was going wrong.

On swept the Sprite, and the first vessel she met was hastily boarded and set on fire in a score of places, the crew being taken completely by surprise. By this time an alarm was fired from the forts on shore, and the news quickly spread

CHAPTER II.—The Boy Privateer Begins His Cruise.

The time for the young privateer's bold stroke had been well timed. The Sprite lay at a distance from the other vessels in the harbor, and her commander and officers were all at the governor's ball. The Sprite, commanded by Sir Alexander Havens, the very man whom Isabel was to be forced to marry by her obstinate guardian, was a topsail schooner of about two hundred tons, large enough to accommodate a crew of sixty men and carrying fifteen guns, being well pro-

that war had been declared, that an American privateer was abroad, and that every ship in port was to be destroyed.

CHAPTER III.—A Challenge.

The day was fair, the sun shone merrily upon the dancing waves, the breeze was fresh, and the *Sprite* sped lightly over the ocean. In the fore-castle were gathered a dozen men listening to old Bill Capstan, who sat on a sea chest smoking a pipe, his wooden leg thrust out straight before him as he told a yarn of the sea.

All at once a cry from aloft sounded: "Sail ho!" The men sprang up, and were on deck almost as soon as the man aloft had answered the hail from the deck with:

"Dead ahead, sir, and coming this way. Looks like an English frigate."

"Clear the decks!" shouted Leon, "but do not open the ports until I give the word."

Before long the approaching vessel was plainly to be seen from the deck, but it was not until half an hour later that she was seen to be making signals. Hal went below and presently returned with the book and a small telescope.

"They want us to lay to and send an officer aboard," said Hal, in a few moments.

"Signal her that we want to know who she is."

In a few moments the signal flags were fluttering from the peak, and in a short time an answering signal was hoisted from the stranger's peak.

"They want to know if we are not the *Sprite*?" said Hal.

"Tell them we are," said Leon; the two vessels having rapidly neared each other.

The signals were displayed, but no answer was made from the other vessel for several minutes, when the two ships were within hail.

"Stand by to act upon a moment's notice," said Leon, quietly, and the word was passed along in the same manner.

"On board the *Sprite*!" came the hail from the other ship.

"Ahoy!" cried Leon, from the quarter-deck.

"Where are you from?"

"Kingston, in the island of Jamaica."

"Is Captain Sir Alexander Havens on board?"

"No."

"Who commands the *Sprite*?"

"I do!" and the cloak suddenly fell from Leon's shoulders, and revealed him in the full uniform of the United States navy.

"Come on board. I wish to ask you some questions."

"If you have any business with me, come on board and state it!" answered Leon, and at that moment a ball of bunting shot up to the peak, hung for an instant, and then unrolled and showed the Stars and Stripes.

"Show your teeth, bullies!" cried Leon, and in a second every port was thrown open and the muzzles of the guns were thrust forth. At the same time a ringing cheer was given, and as the *Sprite* swept past the English vessel a broadside was poured in upon her.

The British flag was quickly displayed, and the

enemy answered with a flying shot from her bow chasers, that showed that she had not been entirely unprepared for such a move. Suddenly there was a collision, under which both vessels rocked violently.

In an instant the two ships were grappled together, and with a ringing cry Leon and a score of his followers leaped over the rail before any assistance could be offered, and dashed straight for the quarter-deck. Leon was the first to reach it, and here he met the captain of the enemy's ship, sword in hand.

"Into the sea with you, pirate!" cried the Englishman, a man of giant build and the manners of a tyrant. "Traitor to your flag, yield this instant or I will cut you from head to heels."

"I am no traitor," answered Leon, calmly, putting himself on guard. "I am an American privateer captain, and yonder vessel is my lawful prize. If you can conquer her from me, you are welcome to her. Let this contest decide."

In an instant the daring boy had attacked his giant foe with the utmost fierceness, and the latter was compelled to fight as he had never fought before.

CHAPTER IV.—A Dashing Retreat.

The boy privateer was a splendid swordsman, and as he parried the blows aimed at him by his giant opponent all marveled at his strength of arm and clearness of his eye, as well as the great coolness which he displayed, holding his ground as though rooted to the deck, and not giving way as much as an inch. The Englishman was evidently astonished, but, relying upon his superior strength, he now pressed forward as if to end the combat by a few swift blows.

The Englishman fumed and frothed, and swore beneath his breath, for try as he would he could not break through his boyish opponent's guard, and was obliged continually to defend himself. Suddenly, while the two leaders were fighting furiously on the quarter, a slight, boyish form was seen to hurry up the companion ladder and spring lightly to Leon's side.

"Captain," he whispered, clinging to him and yet not impeding his movements, advancing as Leon advanced, and retreating as the latter retreated. "Two frigates are approaching. We must get away at once or we are lost."

The Englishman essayed to rush in upon his opponent, seeing him about to bend over to speak to the boy, but Leon suddenly dashed forward, one arm about the boy, carrying him on, and the giant's sword was sent flying from his hand, and in another instant Leon's sword passed through his hip. The Englishman fell to the deck heavily, and in a second Leon turned to the boy and said:

"Run, Paul, and tell Hal and Derrick to fire this ship and then retreat, with all haste, to our own."

In a moment the boy was gone. Staggering to his feet, his eyes inflamed with rage, the British captain whipped out a brace of pistols and hissed:

"Now, my bold lad, we will see if you shall escape."

Flash! Crash! Two swift blows like strokes of lightning, and the Englishman was disarmed.

"Pick up your sword if you desire to finish the fight," said Leon.

"Yes, and it shall end in your death," muttered the other, with a fierce imprecation. "Look. Do you see those two sails? They belong to English vessels. You shall never escape! Hurrah, my men! Fight on, aid is at hand, and soon——"

His boy opponent pressed him so hard that the words died in his throat and a terrible fear oppressed him. Foot by foot he was forced backwards towards the taffrail, foot by foot he was driven towards the sea, the blows coming in thick and fast, and impossible to avoid except by flight. Then, of a sudden, flames broke out in nearly a dozen places.

A booming sound came across the water, answered at once by the cannon on board the privateer. In an instant the air was dense with smoke, and the two vessels were shut out from the sight of the approaching frigates.

Then a sharp, clear whistle of a peculiar note rang out, and in a twinkling the privateers hurried on board their own craft. In another instant the two vessels are cut apart, and a broadside is poured in upon the British ship.

"Up with all sail and away!" cried Leon, in a ringing voice. "It is no sin to take to one's heels when opposed by an overwhelming force, and all is fair in love and war."

When the smoke lifted and the British ships reached the disabled Disturber, the privateer was half a mile away, and scudding towards the open sea, pursuit being out of the question until the crippled frigate was cared for.

The captain was badly wounded, many of his best men were killed, and his vessel was afire in a dozen places, the flames threatening before long to reach the magazine. Leon had gone to his cabin, thrown down his hat and removed his belt, when Hal hurriedly entered and said:

"There is a man on board who claims your protection. He came over from the frigate when we retreated. The men were about to fall upon him when he cried out that he was no enemy and that you would spare his life when you saw him. He says his name is Darke——"

"Darke Crenshawe on board this vessel!" interrupted Leon. "His life must be spared, but I fear he is no friend of mine. Send him to me."

"Then you do know the man?" asked Hal, in surprise.

"Yes, he is my cousin," returned Leon, calmly.

"But you never told me that you had any relatives on——"

"It is of no consequence, Hal," said Leon, with a smile. "There is no secret about it. Tell the men that I do not wish this person harmed. On second thoughts, I do not care to see him; not now, at all events."

The young lieutenant hurried from the cabin, muttering to himself:

"His cousin on his father's side, and I thought he was the last of the name. There is some mystery here. I don't like the looks of Mr. Darke Crenshawe, and I mean to watch him."

When he reached the deck he hurried to the waist, where a knot of men had gathered, and said:

"Release that man. Captain Leon says that no harm must come to him, and that he must be set free."

The sailors fell back, and a man dressed in a half uniform stepped forward and took off his hat. His hair was long and gathered in a knot at the back of his neck, his hands were white and tapering, his limbs were shapely, and he had the look of a person of good birth, but there was still something in the glance of his eye, certain hard lines about his mouth, and a scarcely perceptible curve of the nose which Hal did not like, and which prejudiced him against the man from the start. The latter advanced a pace, bowed and smiled, and then said:

"And my gallant young cousin—where is he? May I not see him? It was with great joy that I recognized him during the fight, and I made all haste to leave the enemy's vessel when an opportunity presented itself."

"Captain Leon does not wish to be disturbed at present," interrupted Hal. "If you desire to make any change you will find a vacant berth in the midshipman's quarters. Hawley! Show Mr. Crenshawe below."

"As you please," said the other, still smiling. "You are doubtless right. The cabin is crowded, of course. Please give my regards to my distinguished relative, and say that I am anxiously awaiting the moment when I can present them in person."

He then bowed and went forward, Hal returning aft, musing:

"I don't like him, for all his smiles and fashionable graces. I can see villainy written on every line of his face."

As Hal was about to enter the cabin, the boy Paul suddenly intercepted him and said in a low tone:

"I like not this black-browed stranger, with his white teeth and his evil smile, and it will not be amiss perhaps if I keep a watch upon him!"

"Indeed it will not, my boy," said Hal, "and there's no one to whom I would sooner entrust our captain's safety than yourself. Your eye is keen and your hand swift. Keep watch, Paul, and never relax your vigilance a moment."

CHAPTER V.—A Secret Signal.

Two or three days after the fight with the English frigate, Leon was cruising about in search of anything belong to the enemy that he might seize, when the man at the lookout reported a strange vessel several miles to windward and evidently coming toward them.

"Can you make out whether she is a merchantman or a war vessel, Derrick?" asked Leon.

After a brief interval Derrick turned to the young captain and said:

"I make her out to be a fighting craft, sir; but she ain't a regular man-o'-war."

"A privateer, perhaps," mused Leon. "However, we must not take chances. Hal, see that all is made ready, as quietly as possible, in case we should have to fight."

"Ay, ay," said Hal, hurrying away, while Leon sent Paul, the cabin boy, for his telescope.

As the boy was returning, Isabel hastened from the cabin and flew to Leon's side, closely followed by the polite Darke Crenshawe, who said in his smoothest tones:

"I have been endeavoring to assure the lady, my dear cousin, that there is really no danger—that the stranger is a privateer like ourselves, and fighting under the same flag——"

"You do not know if he is or not!" said Leon, shortly. "There is no necessity of alarming the lady by saying anything until I chose to acquaint her with the fact that an enemy is in sight."

"Pardon me, if I have been rash," said Darke Crenshawe, bowing low. "I assure you, my dear cousin——"

"I have nothing more to say," said Leon, taking the glass from Paul. "Isabel, you had best retire."

The young commander hastened to the quarter-deck and Isabel went into the cabin with Paul.

"I heard what you said, my lady," whispered the boy, "and I will keep watch if our captain does not. I like not this dark stranger myself, but——"

"You are a brave lad," said the girl, "and I trust you, but—hush!"

Paul turned quickly, and saw Darke Crenshawe only a few paces behind.

"Yes, my lady," he said, opening the door of Isabel's stateroom. "I will see that your orders are obeyed," and then, as Isabel passed into the room, he shut the door and stood before it.

Darke Crenshawe passed on, smiling, and Paul, who thought he had divided the man's purpose, was greatly puzzled.

"He knows that I suspect him," the boy presently thought, "but he does not want me to know that he knows it, in order to put me off my guard."

At that moment there was a cry from the mast-head.

"If I ain't out of my reckoning, sir, yon fellow is no honest privateer, but a dastardly pirate."

"A pirate!" gasped Paul. "Then the fight will indeed be desperate, for our captain has sworn to drive all such from the sea!"

Leon hurried on deck in time to see the stranger, who had drawn much nearer during his absence, run a ball of bunting up to the main peak, which, when it unfurled, proved to be the hated black flag of the buccaneer.

"Ha! he shows his colors," cried Leon, "and now show him ours. Pirates are our enemies as well as the British, and worse. I have respect for an onest foe, but none of these vampires. Clear the decks for action!"

Suddenly, in the bustle of preparation, Paul saw two or three signal flags flying from the top of the foremast. The boy looked up at the flags and made a mental note of them, and then, with a sudden inspiration, sprang forward. When he reached the foremast, the flags were no longer visible.

Darke Crenshawe was standing there, smiling, as was his wont. Paul said nothing, but hurried aft. Diving into the cabin he rushed into Leon's room, and presently brought out a book of signals used by the different naval powers of the world. Turning the pages hurriedly, he soon chanced upon a certain combination of colors, one above the other.

"Ha, here it is! The very colors that I saw—blue, red and yellow, green and white, dark blue—yes, and in the same position. What do they mean?"

"Your strength is vastly superior to ours!" That's what the signal reads. Who displayed it? Crenshawe? What has he to do with pirates? I must watch him closer than ever, for if it were not he who gave that signal, then I was never more mistaken in my life."

As he reached the deck he heard the boom of cannon, and an instant later a heavy shot flew through the rigging high above his head. In an instant the privateer answered with a broadside, and the battle began.

CHAPTER VI.—The Fight on the Pirate Ship.

As soon as he had drawn the fire of the pirate Leon changed his course and sent a broadside right across the pirate's decks. Then, while his vessel still quivered from the rebound, he bore down upon the enemy under the cover of the smoke, and before the pirate realized what had happened, the two vessels came together with a shock.

"Make fast! Board! Over with you all! Hurl the miscreants into the sea!"

In an instant two score of brave fellows, with Leon at their head, swarmed upon the pirates' deck at the quarter. A moment later another party, headed by Hal, poured over the rail forward.

The boy commander met the pirate chief on his own deck, and at once engaged him in combat. Darke Crenshawe, sword in hand, was making his way toward the spot where Leon and the corsair were still desperately fighting. Paul followed, his eyes upon Crenshawe.

Suddenly the latter appeared to slip and fall from stepping in a pool of blood, his naked sword in his hand. Leon's back was toward him, and there seemed to be nothing to prevent that keen blade from being driven straight through the young commander's body.

With a shrill cry Paul sprang forward. His light sword flashed in the air like a ray of light. It caught Crenshawe's blade almost at the moment that it touched the gold lace upon Leon's coat. There was a flash, a whistling sound, and then a splash in the water.

Crenshawe fell at Leon's feet face downward, his arm outstretched upon the deck. The boy privateer captain's life had been saved as by a miracle. Except for the devotion of one brave lad that instant would have been his last. Even now the danger was not all averted. Crenshawe's hand grasped one of his ankles and he wavered.

The pirate, quick to seize the advantage, leaped forward, leaving his own front exposed. The brave cabin boy gave one leap and threw himself between Leon and the pirate. He received the buccaneer on the point of his light sword, and it was driven in clear to the hilt and wrenched from his hand. The pirate fell dead, and Leon caught the half-fainting boy in his arms.

"Charge, my brave lads!" he shrieked. "The wolf is dead! Drive the whelps into the sea!"

With a shout that made the air resound, the gallant tars joined their forces and rushed with a terrible irresistible force upon the buccaneers. The latter, losing heart at the sudden death of their chief, fled in dismay. Some plunged at once into the sea, many hurled themselves madly upon the blades of their foes, and some seemed to go mad and stared blankly at the carnage going on around them, without the power or will to stay it. Before many minutes the pirate vessel was in the hands of the privateers, the greater part of her crew dead, and those who survived being too disheartened to make even a show of resistance.

The loss on the privateer had been slight, only three men having been killed and a dozen or so having received hurts which could be easily attended to.

The dead were buried at sea, the wounded cared for, the prisoners secured below, the decks cleaned, damages repaired to some extent, and a small prize crew put in charge.

"We need all the good vessels we can have," said Leon, "and this prize should be a welcome addition to our navy. Whom shall I put in charge. I have no one to spare, and I have no more men that I really need."

"You might put your cousin aboard and send him home," suggested Hal. "He was returning when we found him on board the Disturber, and is anxious to do something for his country, so he says."

Leon said nothing for a moment, and then asked:

"Do you think that if you ran into the nearest American port with the prize that you could rejoin me at some place along the coast?"

Hal saw plainly that the boy commander did not wish to speak further of his mysterious cousin, and he answered:

"I could take the prize into port, turn her over to the government and perhaps be appointed to her with a larger crew, but I do not wish to leave unless it is absolutely necessary."

"I think it is, and you can take Paul along. Give him a good berth if you are given command, for he is a worthy lad."

"And Crenshawe will remain with you?"

"No, of course not. He wishes to return home, you say."

"Then I wish he would go on some other vessel," said Hal, hotly. "I don't like the man, and from things I have gathered here and there, I know he bears no love toward you. I am even willing to affirm that he seeks your life."

"I prefer not to speak further on the matter, Hal," said Leon, as quietly as before. "Crenshawe will go with you."

"He'll have no chance to harm you, then," muttered Hal, half to himself, "and if he meddles with me I can soon quiet him."

he could not bear to have the girl out of his sight a moment.

"I don't see why we could not have captured a parson at the same time we took the Sprite," he said, "and then May would now be my wife and could go with me on the prize."

"How do you know that I am going to marry you at all, Lieut. Hurry?" asked May, mischievously.

"Why, you said you would."

"Did I?" said May, saucily, although she blushed withal.

"Certainly you did."

"But I may change my mind. That is a woman's privilege."

"Then I wish all the more that we had captured a parson when we left Kingston," laughed Hal, "for in that event you couldn't."

Darke Crenshawe had expressed a desire to remain with Leon, but the latter, without deigning an explanation, had decided the matter at once.

"I desire that you shall go with Lieut. Hurry," he said, and the matter was ended.

The two vessels were scarcely two miles apart, having at length separated, when signals were seen flying at the peak of the prize.

"What does that mean?" muttered Leon. "An enemy in sight? Derrick!"

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the faithful seaman.

"Ahoy, there, Jack Nubbles, you have hawk's eyes. Go aloft and see if there's any suspicious craft in the neighborhood of the prize."

"Ay, ay!" and in a moment Jack was running up the shrouds like a monkey.

Leon hurried below for his telescope, and as he came out of his cabin he met May.

"There is danger?" she asked.

"I fear so."

"To Hal's vessel? Oh, why didn't I go with him to share it!"

"Young women are usually reckoned of no account in a battle," said Leon, dryly.

So saying, he hurried on deck, just as Nubbles shouted down:

"I can make out another vessel, sir, but I'm not sure of her colors."

"Where away, Jack?" asked Derrick.

"Heading for Lieut. Hurry, sir, under all sail. She's armed, I take it. Looks like a frigate."

Leon ascended the main rigging a few feet above the rail, and pointed his glass in the direction of the prize.

"She keeps Hal between herself and us," he muttered. "Whether purposely or not I cannot tell. If she proves to be an enemy Hal can hardly hope to cope with her."

After trying to better make out the strange vessel for a few minutes Leon called to the man aloft:

"Can you make out what they are doing, Jack?"

"No, sir, but Mr. Hurry seems trying to get out of the way."

"Put about!" cried Leon, suddenly. "We can afford to run no risks. The stranger may be an enemy, and if so Hal can hardly hold his own against her."

The order was quickly executed, and the Sprite began to bear down upon the prize. Meanwhile, on board the latter vessel matters had assumed a serious aspect.

CHAPTER VII.—Hal in Difficulties.

The Sprite and the prize were about to part company. Hal, with a crew of fifteen men, had gone aboard the prize, Drake Crenshawe and Paul accompanying him. Isabel Vernon and May remained on the Sprite, much to Hal's sorrow, for

Hal had noticed the approach of the stranger, and he had at once sent Paul for his telescope. Hal scrutinized the stranger for several minutes, and then called up Hodge, who had been Derrick's mate on the Sprite.

"Take a look at yonder fellow, Hodge, and tell me what you think of her," he said. "You were impressed in the English navy and saw a good many of their ships. You may know this one."

The man touched his hat, took the glass, held it to his eye for a full minute, and then said:

"Well, I can't say as I know what her name is, sir, but she's surely English, and a frigate at that."

Hal at once signaled to Leon, and anxiously awaited a movement on the latter's part. The stranger came steadily on, and at last Hodge declared it to be his firm opinion that she was the *Vindex*—one of the ships in port at Kingston at the time of their escape. Hal at once began to sheer off and take a course which would bring him nearer to the Sprite.

Shortly afterward the latter was seen to have altered her course. A moment later extra sail was put on the stranger, and she was seen to be bearing directly down upon them. A few moments later the British ensign was displayed and a shot fired.

On came the Englishman, and soon opened fire, being superior in every respect to the former pirate vessel. Hal answered the fire and then the air being thick with smoke, quickly changed his course so as to run down to the Sprite. The frigate evidently suspected as much, for when the smoke cleared she was seen running on a course which would bring her between the two vessels.

"She intends to cut us out," thought Hal, "but I mean to give her a good fight for all that. Stand by your guns, my bullies! Make every shot tell."

On came the enemy, and a well-directed shot presently struck the foremast half way between the deck and the cross-trees, sending huge splinters flying in all directions. Right upon the heels of this missile came another which struck in the same place, cut the mast in two, and brought all the top hamper down upon the deck.

"Clear away!" shouted Hal.

At that moment the boy Paul sprang to his side.

"Not a moment is to be lost, sir!" he almost hissed. "There is a fire below decks, and it will soon reach the magazine!"

CHAPTER VIII.—An Insolent Demand and Its Refusal.

For a moment Hal was made speechless by the boy's startling announcement.

"When did you discover this?" he at length gasped.

"But this moment. It is not the result of accident—it was design. It will be impossible to check it now."

"Go tell Hodge and Hawler as quickly as possible to be ready to leave the ship on an instant's notice," said Hal, "and keep your eyes open."

The boy was gone in a moment, and Hal, glanc-

ing first toward the frigate and then toward the Sprite, called out:

"Fire! Let them have all you can give them."

There was a roar that shook the heavens, and the smoke was so thick that one could scarcely see the length of the vessel. In another moment Paul was at Hal's side.

"They are ready, sir."

"You have seen nothing else?"

"The fire below is gaining. If you attempt to reach the magazine now, you will only fan the flames. I have closed all the doors of the bulkheads, and locked them as well."

"Lower the boats on the port side and pull for the Sprite. Every man to his place. I will shoot the first who forgets his."

The boats were made ready in the briefest time, without the slightest confusion, every man taking his proper position.

"Mr. Crenshawe, you go with Hodge," said Hal, noticing the polite cousin of the boy captain standing irresolute by the mainmast.

The man smiled, as was his wont, but Hal watched his face narrowly and thought he detected an evil look upon it.

"Lower—down with the companions—all hands overboard!"

Hal was the last to leave the ship, and Paul went down just ahead of him. The Sprite had now opened fire upon the frigate, but the distance was still too great to hope that her shots would prove effective.

"The more smoke, the better for us," thought Hal. "Should I have warned the enemy? If they attempt to board they will be blown to atoms."

They had barely gone a dozen boat-lengths from the ship before there came a great puff of white smoke which seemed to shut out the sight of everything, and, immediately afterwards, there was a tremendous burst of sound as if all of heaven's artillery had been discharged at one moment.

"You were none too soon with your warning, my lad," said Hal, in a low tone, for as yet none of the men had suspected the real reason for so soon abandoning the prize.

For several minutes the surface of the sea was obscured by the dense smoke which hung over it, and it was impossible for one on either of the vessels to see the other or the boats. Leon had not seen Hal's maneuver, and when the pirate ship blew up he had no doubt that the gallant young fellow had perished with all hands.

The Sprite bore straight down towards where the frigate had last been seen, when suddenly, as the smoke began to clear away they heard a voice right out of the water, calling to them:

"On board the Sprite, ahoy! Port your helm or you'll run us down."

"My eyes! what's that?" cried one of the sailors, hurrying to the rail.

"Hard up!" shouted another, who had run out upon the bowsprit.

"What is it, Nubbles?" asked Leon, running forward.

"Lieut. Hurry and the boats, sir, right under our feet. Throw 'em a line there, Bill Capstan!"

Hal's boat was quickly hauled alongside, and the young lieutenant and his men clambered on board as the Sprite hove to.

"Thank Heaven that you are still alive, Hal, old friend!" cried Leon, grasping the other's hand warmly.

"Yes, and all of us—not a man is missing," said Hal, and then, dropping his voice, "and we all owe our lives to Paul. That boy is a hero. I will tell you more anon."

At that moment, the *Sprite* being hove to, as the boats were pulling towards her, the frigate suddenly opened fire upon them, having discovered them after the air had cleared. Not a vestige of the pirate ship remained, and it was only by a miracle that the *Vindex* had escaped. Had they succeeded in boarding her, as they had intended, not a man of the boarding party would have remained alive. Had the explosion taken place five minutes later the consequences would have been most disastrous.

The commander of the frigate, throwing aside all the laws of humanity, now opened fire on the boats. A solid round shot struck the bow of one of them, and in an instant it was shattered and its occupants thrown into the sea. Luckily one of the others was close at hand, and the men were speedily rescued.

The men having come aboard, the boats were abandoned, and the *Sprite* put once more upon her course. As she dashed down upon the frigate, a broadside was poured in upon the latter with terrible effect. The mainmast was badly splintered, two boats were destroyed, a gun had been dismounted, and a large section of the rail torn away. As the *Sprite* swept by, the gallant privateers gave a ringing cheer, and Leon quickly put his vessel about so as to renew the attack.

"On board the *Sprite*!" suddenly hailed an officer on the quarter-deck of the frigate as a white flag was displayed.

"Ay, ay!" cried Leon, as he gave orders to lie to.

"Who commands the *Sprite*?"

"Captain Leon Crenshawe, bearer of letters of marque from the Congress of the United States."

"Is Miss Vernon a prisoner on board that vessel? If so, and you will give her up, we will allow you four-and-twenty hours' start."

"Who is it who makes these terms?" asked Leon, the two vessels being now not more than three fathoms distant one from the other.

"Captain Sir Alexander Havens, commander of His Majesty's ship-of-war *Vindex*," was the answer.

"Then tell the most august Captain Sir Alexander Havens, of his most gracious Majesty's royal navy, that I accept no terms from him, and that if he wishes to speak with me, he must do so in person."

At that moment a man of commanding presence appeared on the quarter-deck of the *Vindex*.

"Be careful what you do, you miserable young pirate," stormed the newcomer. "Not satisfied with luring us almost to our deaths, you make prisoners of helpless women, insult His Majesty's officers, and——"

"Enough!" cried Leon. "We are not pirates and you know it. We do not fire upon men escaping for their lives from a burning ship. Miss Vernon is on board this vessel, but is not a prisoner. She is here voluntarily and will remain here."

"Insolent young dog!" roared Sir Alexander.

"Your blood be upon your head, for I won't spare a man or boy of your crew after that."

So saying, the enraged commander snatched the white flag from the sailor holding it, and dashed it into the sea.

"All hands stand by to board!" he roared. "Now, then, give them a volley."

"Treacherous hounds!" hissed Leon. "I might have known. About ship! All hands to stations. Give her a last broadside and away."

The *Vindex* was a much larger vessel than the *Sprite*, and Leon would not endanger the lives of those he loved by engaging in a contest which promised to end in the destruction of one or both vessels, and he therefore determined to retreat. The *Sprite* was soon put about, and a volley poured in upon the frigate as she sped away.

One day a storm came out of the northeast, the waves rose higher, and the wind blew with the force of a tornado; the sky was as black as ink, and the seething, foam-crested waves seemed to be pursuing the little vessel relentlessly.

"So long as I have the sea before me," mused Leon, "I fear not, but if I were driven upon some unseen rock or dashed upon a lee shore, nothing could save us. I must try and make a port as soon as possible."

For days and days the little vessel drove before the wind, and it was only by the constant care of the brave boy captain and his gallant crew that they were not swamped.

It was more than a week before the gale spent itself, and in all that time the *Sprite* drove before it, stanch and steady, riding the waves proudly, defying the winds, and proving that, like her young commander, she had a heart of oak, and that nothing could daunt her proud spirit.

CHAPTER IX.—An Interruption.

In the beautiful harbor of Montevideo, shaped like a horseshoe, and affording a safe haven to storm-tossed vessels, with the grand old mountain crowned with its quaint Spanish castle behind, and the town itself, with its neat houses and well-kept streets, its row of trees, and its shiny beach in the foreground, the *Sprite* lay at anchor.

When the gale had blown itself out, and Leon had taken his bearings, he found that he was so far down the coast that the port of Montevideo was the nearest where he could put in to make necessary repairs, provision his vessel, and get more men in case he wished to increase his crew. Montevideo being a neutral port, the *Sprite* was as safe there as she would have been in any American harbor, but nevertheless Leon said very little about his mission there, and did what was necessary to be done as quietly as possible.

They had been in Montevideo a week, and had succeeded in having all the necessary repairs done by the payment of considerable money, no other inducement seeming to move the indolent, rest-loving Spaniards, and Leon began to make preparations for leaving.

There was one ceremony that must be performed before they went away. This was the double marriage between Leon and Isabel, and Hal and May. Isabel was ready to become Leon's wife at any time for then the young commander would

have a right to protect her that no one could gainsay.

When everything had been done upon the *Sprite* that was needed, Leon and Hal set out for the cathedral, accompanied by the ladies and some of the crew. Paul, the cabin boy, had been in Spain when much younger, and he spoke the language fluently, so he was sent ahead to apprise the priest of the intended wedding.

The notary asked a good many questions regarding the parentage of the ladies, if their parents consented, if either of the men had been married, if there were to be any settlements, if any immediate to the union existed, and more to the purpose and not to the purpose, till Hal at last grew impatient and said:

"Dear me, I never supposed it was such a job getting married. I wish we were in a civilized land, for then we would have had it over long ago."

However, the business was settled at last, Leon gave the notary a good deal more than his fee, the licenses were made out and signed by all the contracting parties and, armed with these precious papers, the boy captain started for the cathedral. On the way thither they met Paul, who quickly drew Leon aside and whispered:

"A British ship has just come into the harbor, and a great frigate lies just outside, the water being too shallow for her to enter. I thought you would be delayed, and I went down to the port to look at her."

"Yes, yes, my boy, and you have learned that—"

"The one in the harbor is the *Vindex*, with Captain Sir Alexander Havens on board; the other is that big fellow who followed us so persistently just before the storm."

"We must get away before we are discovered," said Leon, calling Hal to his side.

"What is the matter?"

"The *Vindex* is in the harbor."

"But the port is a neutral one!"

"Exactly, but the high sea is not. There is no time to be lost."

As they proceeded they encountered several English seamen in the street, and near the cathedral they saw an officer, his uniform telling them at once what he was.

"An English lieutenant!" exclaimed May; "the first one I've seen. What is he doing here?"

"The port of Montevideo is open to all nations, I believe," said Hal, lightly, and in another minute they entered the church.

The place was dark and damp and gloomy, and even the blaze of light around the altar at the further end could not dispel a feeling of chilliness that suddenly possessed Isabel.

"Courage, dearest, all will yet be well," he said.

They were obliged to wait a considerable time before the services were concluded, and then one of the priests came down the aisle and beckoned to Paul. The boy hurried forward, exchanged a few words, and then returned to Leon and said:

"There is some objection because you are not Romanists, but I said that the license had been granted, and that you would donate something to the church, and now it will be all right."

"That boy is a treasure," said May. "I had

really begun to think that we could not be married."

The party now walked slowly up the broad central aisle, preceded by two chanting priests, and as they neared the altar the organ pealed forth joyously, and a burst of clear, boyish voices came from the choir high above their heads.

At the same moment two English naval officers, accompanied by some Spanish official of high rank and a squad of soldiers, halted in front of the cathedral.

"They are about to begin!" cried the English officer of higher rank in Spanish. "Arrest the miscreant at once. Take your men in and hurry the villain off to prison."

"A soldier cannot enter the house of the Lord except to worship or confess his sins," said the officer.

"But if we wait to arrest him here the mischief will have been done. I tell you, the lady is my affianced wife, and this young man is a pirate—a hunted felon. You must do something at once."

"Yes, but not to arrest. We can forbid the marriage."

"Good! That will be better. Then we can arrest him afterwards. It was very fortunate that Lieutenant the Honorable Mr. Valentine Clyde-Clifton recognized the fellow."

The other officer bowed low and said:

"It is not likely, sir, that I would forget him nor the ladies. One of them was to marry my cousin, the Honorable Fitz Roy Boby, of His Majesty's ship-of-war—"

"Pardon, gentlemen," said the Spaniard, "the music ceases. We must hasten."

The wedding party paused at the altar and knelt to receive the benediction, the music fell almost to a hush, and only the voice of the priest could be heard.

The ceremony proceeded to the point where the minister asked if there were any valid reasons why these two should not be joined in marriage and three men rushed down the main aisle.

"I forbid the marriage," cried one. "The lady is my promised bride, she is the ward of the English governor of Jamaica, she is not of age, she has no right to marry."

"Captain Havens!" muttered Hal. "What is he doing here? This is a pretty complication."

There was instant confusion, and Leon, springing to his feet, faced the angry Englishman, and said:

"Captain Havens, you have nothing to say in this matter. This lady is to be my wife, and she is neither under your protection nor subject to your wishes."

"I forbid the marriage!" cried Sir Alexander, hotly, and then, speaking in Spanish, "the lady is a ward of his excellency the governor-general of Jamaica, she is a minor, she is not a Catholic and cannot—"

"Your reverence," said Leon, "all this has been settled. This man has no claim, the lady does not wish to be his wife, he has no—"

"The man is a pirate, a fugitive from justice, a man with innocent blood on his hands," said the Spanish officer, rapidly. "He has not confessed, he is a heretic, he cannot be married in a Christian church!"

"The marriage cannot take place," said the minister.

"Arrest the pirate—to prison with him!" hissed the Spaniard.

"Do not let her go with him; take her from him!" cried Sir Alexander.

"My sons, this is the house of the Lord. I cannot forbid any to come or to go. The young man must not be molested while under this roof."

CHAPTER X.—The Fox Escapes.

Leon and Hal, with Isabel and May between them, and flanked by the gallant tars of the *Sprite*, passed down the aisle towards the door, the Spanish and English officers falling back and scowling at them. Sir Alexander would have drawn his sword, but the Spaniard restrained him. Paul had suddenly disappeared, but in the confusion his absence was scarcely noticed. They had barely reached the plaza outside when there arose a cry, and a score of evil-looking fellows, armed with stiletos, rushed forward.

"Down with the pirates—down with them! Kill the heretics!"

It was the religious zeal more than the hatred of robbers that incensed the mob, and an angry roar arose as the cry was caught up and repeated. In an instant nearly a hundred savage men and women surrounded the little party. Suddenly a clear, shrill voice was heard and Paul broke through the mob with a dozen Yankee tars at his heels, crying:

"For shame! Would you attack Americanos, your friends, your allies, at the bidding of the hated English, men of a nation who have always robbed and abused the Spaniard? Who wrested the fortress of Gibraltar from you, who robbed you of rich provinces in the new world, who have made slaves of your governors and dethroned your kings? Is it the Americano? No, it is the hated Englishman."

"Bravo! Live the American, perish the Briton!" cried the mob.

Sir Alexander turned pale as the mob began to surge toward him, and it might have gone hard with the Englishman had not Don Jacinto suddenly hurried them into the church, by way of a small door at one side.

Meanwhile Leon and his friends had crossed the plaza, and had turned down a street leading to the harbor. They had nearly reached the water when they met Darke Crenshawe, smiling and bowing, and more effusive than ever. Leon went at once to the landing-place, had assisted Isabel into the boat, and was about to follow, when two men approached rapidly along the wharf, having come out from behind a ware house. One of these was Sir Alexander Havens, and as he came nearer he drew his sword and said:

"Now, you young braggart, draw and defend yourself!"

"Yes, draw and defend yourself!" said the other, who was very foppishly dressed, although wearing the uniform of a lieutenant of the British navy.

"It's the booby!" cried Hal. "What does he want?"

"Sir," said the other, "that lady in the boat is my bride that is to be."

"No, Mr. Fitzroy Booby, you are mistaken. 'She is to be my wife.'"

"Boby, sir—damme, sir, the Hon. Mr. Fitz Roy—"

"Booby, however you spell it," laughed Hal. "Put up your sword, sir, and return to your vessel as speedily as possible before the mob learns you are English."

Paul, Hal and a dozen sailors had thrown themselves between Leon and the furious Englishman.

"I challenge you to mortal combat, you Yankee scorpion!" hissed Captain Havens. "You have insulted me, and I demand satisfaction!"

"The duel will be fought at sea, Captain Havens," said Leon. "You have allies lying outside the harbor waiting for us. Get all your friends together and attack us when we go out. You dare not do so here."

Sir Alexander fumed and threatened to cut Leon down where he stood, but at that moment Don Jacinto, Lieut. Clyde-Clifton and one or two strange officers came hurrying forward.

"Lose not a moment, Sir Alexander," said the Spaniard. "Your escape from the church has been discovered, the populace is furious against you and your men, and will tear you to pieces. Enter your boats at once, for the mob may be here at any moment."

"I shall meet you again!" hissed Havens, as he was hurried away by Don Jacinto.

"Very likely," said Leon, and in another moment he had taken his place in the boat and was being rowed out to the *Sprite*.

By the time the angry mob had reached the esplanade, the boats were well out upon the water. When Leon reached the *Sprite*, which lay at some distance from the Vindex, he gave orders that no one must leave to go on shore, that no one was to be permitted to come on board, and that no one must remain on deck unless concealed. Outside the harbor the English frigate lay in wait to follow the *Sprite* as soon as she came out, but she remained at anchor within the harbor. At night it was the same, and the *Sprite* might have been manned by the dead for all the life she showed. There was no lights, not a sound could be heard, no one left the ship, no one went on board. Until a late hour the English captain waited anxiously for any movement on the part of the silent privateer. The night grew black, the tempest arose, and all were glad to seek shelter, but when morning came, the *Sprite* had unaccountably disappeared.

CHAPTER XI.—In a Nameless Sea.

"Well, of all the strange adventures I've had in my time, and I've seen a power of 'em, this is the most surprisin', ever had!"

The events that had occurred were so strange that even so good a romancer as old Bill was set at naught, and could invent nothing to equal them. The vessel lay at rest on the calm waters of a land-locked bay; toward the sea stretched a line of reefs, beyond which the waters were in a state of constant agitation, beyond which lay the shores of what seemed an island, a stretch of white beach, a thick grove of trees and a line

of white hills beyond. Where they were, or how they had come hither they knew not, for at one moment they had been battling with the winds and waves, and at the next they were on an even keel, and when day suddenly dawned, an hour later, they found themselves in the bay in front of the island. That night, in the harbor of Montevideo, when they had stolen away under cover of the darkness and in the face of a terrible storm, the wind had borne them towards the south at frantic speed. There was nothing to do but run before the wind, but the waves seemed to follow faster than they could scud, and before long they were in danger of being swamped.

For days and days, without the light of the sun or stars to guide them, they were hurried on, now this way, now that, till all points of the compass were alike, day meant no more than night, and they were hopelessly—helplessly adrift in a nameless sea. How long a time they were thus beset no one knew, but at length one black, tempestuous night, wilder and blacker than any that the oldest of them had known, when they had been driving madly before the wind for hours, a giant wave suddenly lifted them high in air, and then they were in calm waters, and when morning came and the sun arose they beheld the most beautiful sight they had ever seen.

"Let us go ashore and see what sort of land we have come to," said Leon to Hal, an hour after sunrise.

They still possessed two boats, and in one of these they embarked, accompanied by Derrick, and started off to make a slight exploration of the island. They called it an island, but they were not certain that it was not part of a continent, though what one it could be they had no present means of knowing.

"There are plenty of trees here," said Leon, as they passed through the grove, "and we can get all the timber we need for repairs."

In about ten minutes they came upon an open space, and Leon uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"The place is inhabited!" he cried.

They were standing upon a sort of plateau, not more than twenty feet wide, but of considerable length, while below them, in a deep valley, so deep that they could easily look down upon the roofs and spires of the tallest buildings, lay a most strange and beautiful city.

It seemed to be a city capable of containing forty or fifty thousand people, but not a soul was visible. Leon advanced to the edge of the plateau and found himself standing on the brink of a sheer precipice. There seemed to be no means of descent, but further to the right Hal declared that he saw a path leading down to the city below.

"There must have been some means of getting up and down," he said. "These people would certainly leave their city now and then."

They presently found one, which, although somewhat steep, was broad enough for safety, and down it they all went. Reaching the level, they found themselves in front of a wide avenue, fully a mile in length, at the further end of which was the great white building with the two square towers which they had seen from above. Grass grew in the street, plants had come up between the stones that gave access to the houses, vines

had climbed about the door-posts, and flowers bloomed in marble basins where once there had been fountains.

But still there was no other sign of life, not a bird or insect or reptile could be seen, and as for human beings, one might as well have looked for them in a tomb.

"This is the strangest place I ever saw," muttered Derrick.

"It is dead beyond a doubt," said Leon, "and has been for ages. No one knows how many years have passed since man has set foot in these silent streets."

"Shall we go on?" said Hal.

"No, we had best return. I would not care to live in such a place, with all its magnificence. The very air seems dead, and then, have you thought that we must be below the sea level? The rise from the beach to the edge of the precipice above was but slight, and at any moment, for aught we know, the sea may come pouring down upon us."

They left the strange dead city behind them, and walked leisurely toward the path leading to the heights above. They had turned three or four times, and were on almost the last incline, when, as they were passing under one of the stone arches, there came a sudden grating sound, and then a trembling was perceptible in the rocky ceiling. Paul, who was in advance, turned and threw himself violently against Leon, hurling him backwards, at the same time uttering a shrill cry of alarm. In a second, a huge block of stone, weighing many tons, fell from the roof upon the path just behind the daring boy, completely blocking the road to the top of the cliff.

CHAPTER XII.—A Way Out.

"Back!" cried Paul; "the whole arch may fall in and crush us!"

The party retreated to the end of the incline, but there were no further signs of danger. The stone that had fallen completely blocked their way, for they could not get over or around it.

"Did any of you hear a strange sound after the rock had fallen?" asked the boy.

"The echo, that was all," said Leon.

"Yes, but there was more; there was a wild laugh, as if in glee over our fate."

"Imagination, Paul," said Hal. "There was no one above. How could any one cast down a solid rock like that?"

"I don't know, sir, but I certainly heard the laugh."

They had now retraced their steps and soon reached the second plane below, which ran through a sort of tunnel. Paul was in the rear, and as he turned the angle his foot slipped under a loose stone and he staggered forward, striking his hand against the inner wall of rock. It gave forth a hollow sound, and the boy instantly called the attention of the others to the fact. Suddenly, to the intense astonishment of all, that part of the wall fell in, as though a slab of stone had turned on a pivot, and an opening large enough to admit a man was disclosed.

"Where does it lead to?" mused Leon. "Perhaps to some deep pit from which there can be no es-

cape, or perhaps to some labyrinth where we might wander until death came to end our sufferings."

"If we only had a light we might venture in," said Hal; "but we have no means of procuring one."

"We can moisten some powder with saliva and make it into a paste, and then light it with a flint," said Paul. "That will give us a good torch."

With a handful of gunpowder from a flask at his belt he formed a cone, six inches in length and two or three wide at the base, tapering to a rather blunt point. With a flint from one of Leon's pistols the cone was ignited, and began to burn slowly, sending out a strong, white light. Derrick took the peculiar torch in his hand and entered the passage, followed by the others, the path stretching out straight before them. The party had proceeded for a considerable distance, when Derrick said:

"Make another cone of powder, my lad. This un is gettin' pretty well used up, and it'll reach my hand before I know it."

Paul took the man's powder horn and was about to pour some into his hand when Derrick uttered a sudden cry and hurled the burning cone to the ground.

"Look out!" cried Paul, suddenly.

Derrick had run against him, and in another moment the horn was dashed from the boy's hand. Some of the powder must have been spilled, for in an instant there was a puff of smoke and then a blaze of light, followed by an explosion. Those who had not thrown themselves upon their faces were dashed to the ground by the force of the shock and the whole passage seemed full of smoke. In a few moments Leon arose to his feet and said:

"What has happened? There seems to be more light in here than before."

"So there is!" cried Hal, springing up and dashing forward. "There is more light. The explosion has torn a hole in the roof of the passage."

"Why, here are some steps," said Paul, "and we were very nearly to the end of the passage. Look! Can you not see a wall just beyond?"

There was, indeed, a flight of stone steps, some seven or eight in number, leading up at one side to the ground above, and Derrick had probably stumbled against the bottom step when he had struck Paul's hand.

Leon hurried up the steps, followed by Hal, Paul and Derrick, and found himself in a grove of trees, a shattered slab of stone lying on the ground near the opening.

"This must be the grove we passed through on the way to the cliff," said Hal.

They were obliged to cut their way through a thicket with their swords and knives, but at least they came out into more open ground, and a few minutes later were in plain sight of the sea. As they left the grove they saw Darke Crenshawe coming towards them, accompanied by two or three of the sailors. The man was smiling as sweetly as ever, and when he came up said:

"We have all been under considerable apprehension as to your safety, my dear cousin. Did you suffer greatly by the shock? I hardly expected to feel earthquakes in this place, and I must confess that I was considerably alarmed."

"We are all safe," cried Leon. "How did you happen to come ashore?"

"Merely out of curiosity, cousin," said Crenshawe. "But I am glad that I did, for at the first shock, I set out to find you."

Repairs on the vessel progressed rapidly. One day all hands again set out to explore the ancient city. Just as they had examined, two or three structures a terrific booming sound was heard and looking up at the mountain they saw that the volcano had burst out again after many years. Leon now shouted:

"We must return to the vessel. There is not a moment to lose if we wish to save our lives."

CHAPTER XIII.—Between Life and Death.

Down the broad avenue they hurried, and as they ran they could see the shadows growing denser, hear the rumblings of the giant imprisoned under the mountain, feel the earth vibrate under their feet.

"Hasten, hasten!" cried Leon, catching Isabel in his arms and dashing on. "If the sea rushes in we are lost."

When they were within a hundred feet of the base of the cliff, there came a most violent shock, which threw them to the ground. At the same time there was a terrible sound like a thunder clap, the air seemed filled with dust and flying stones, and in an instant a huge mass broke from the face of the cliff and fell into the valley.

"The path is destroyed!" cried Hal. "There is no way out."

Upon the slope of the mountain there could now be seen a glowing stream making its way slowly but surely down, eating up everything. A great mass of stone and earth had been broken from the cliff, and the winding stairway to the top was exposed in many places. Whether retreat had been entirely cut off no one could yet determine, but in any event the position of the explorers was a most precarious one. In a few minutes the dust cleared away, and the little party who had taken refuge in one of the deserted houses came out upon the avenue. They waited for several minutes, and felt no further shock, although the stream of lava from the mountain top was still slowly descending.

About half the face of the cliff at the point where the inclined planes led up had fallen away, but the path seemed unobstructed, and Leon at last concluded to make an attempt at getting up. They entered the first tunnel and went up for two or three stages, till they came to a point where two paths were opened. There they met with obstacles, the way in some places being so narrow that only one person could pass at a time.

The path had fallen away or had been littered with rubbish, so as to render it well-nigh impassable, but by proceeding slowly and with caution they gained step by step, and at last came to the mouth of the secret passage.

This was so choked up that there was no entering, but the arch from which the stone had fallen in their first passage had now been entirely destroyed, and the path to the top was clear, although very narrow. It was so narrow, in fact, that one was obliged to cling closely to the wall,

and make his way along with the utmost caution, as a single false step would have ended in death. Leon went first, facing the wall, and giving one hand to Isabel, who was followed by Hal, then May, then Paul, and lastly by the others. One by one they reached the top, till Leon, Hal, the ladies and Paul had gained safety on top of the cliff. Darke Crenshawe, Derrick and Hodge could easily make their way up, but with old Bill, with his wooden leg, and the Dutch boy, with his superfluous flesh, further ascent was out of the question. Paul ran off to the shore, hauled those on board the Sprite, and a strong rope was sent on shore. By means of this the five men still on the path were drawn to the top, and none too soon. They had barely been rescued when a huge mass of smoke and flame was seen to shoot up from the crater, and a violent trembling was felt.

"To the shore!" cried Leon. "To the shore for your lives!"

The entire party fled in utter terror to the grove, and hardly had they left the cliff before there was another awful shock, which seemed to shake the island to its very foundations. The cliff fell away to a distance of thirty feet, and huge masses of stone and earth, trees, grass and shrubbery went toppling into the valley. In a few moments the commotion was over, the waves subsided, and all was calm within the little bay, although the breakers still beat against the reefs, and all the sea was white with foam. For a month the volcano smoked on, throwing up ashes and small quantities of lava, the stream on the mountain having evidently flown into some deep gully and filling it, for as yet the city was not disturbed.

"That makes a pretty good torch," said old Bill Capstan, one night, as he sat on deck smoking his pipe, "but——"

What Bill was about to say was never known, for at that moment there came a sound like a thunderclap, and a tongue of fire a hundred feet high was thrown up from the summit of the burning mountain.

CHAPTER XIV.—Homeward Bound.

The volcano had again burst forth, and now the destruction of the silent white city in the valley seemed certain. The great square building, with its two towers, stood as if in a sea of fire; and then, as the red light was reflected on its white walls, seemed to be bathed in blood. Suddenly there came an awful explosion, and the two towers were rent asunder and fell with a crash into the fiery river. Great blocks of stone were hurled into the air and fell upon the roofs of the houses, buildings fell in all directions, marble columns toppled over into the red river, and terrible explosions were heard on all sides. The white city was now as red as blood, and the work of destruction progressed on every hand. Days passed and only a cloud rested upon the mountain. The city was not yet totally destroyed, for here and there could be seen a massive building still standing, as if mocking the ruin and desolation all around it. Weeks passed, and there were no more fiery rains from the mountain, the summit became bleak and cold, and only that thin wreath of smoke remained as evidence of the internal fires not hav-

ing yet subsided. Months rolled on and at last even the smoke disappeared and the volcano was at rest. A year had passed since Leon had come to this strange land in a nameless sea. They were forced now to live upon the supplies in the hold of the vessel. One night, in the darkest hours, when the volcano had showed no sign of activity for months, the prisoners on the Sprite were awakened by a terrible booming sound. Rushing upon deck half-clad, they beheld a bright light in the sky, and saw that the volcanic fires had again burst forth. Terrible as had been the former exhibition, that which they now beheld was infinitely worse. The earth shook with frightful violence, while the sea, breaking over the line of reefs, dashed into the bay in great surges. Then there came a shock worse than all that had preceded it, and a perfect wall of water was seen advancing toward them.

"Cut the cable!" screamed Leon, and Derrick seized a sledge-hammer and smote the great chain holding the anchor. In an instant the little vessel was lifted high in the air, and seemed about to be dashed upon the shore. Then there came another shock, and all the water seemed to rush out of the bay. Over the line of reefs it carried the vessel and well into the ocean, and then, before another wave could dash it back again, all hands flew to their positions. Sail was made, and they dashed off before the wind, leaving the island behind.

"Look!" cried Paul, and they all saw a great white, foaming wall of water rushing towards the island.

They sped away and escaped the wave, but in a few minutes they heard a terrible explosion, and the island was hidden in a cloud of steam. Finally there came a more deafening sound than any they had heard, and with a mighty burst of sound the mountain seemed to dissolve itself in fire. For an hour or more they sped on, but at last the wind moderated, the sky lightened, the sun arose, and where the island had been nothing was to be seen but the ever-restless ocean. They had escaped from the island, but they were still in the dark as to their position on the ocean. Leon determined to put the vessel on a general northerly course, hoping to eventually run up on the South American coast and thus get his bearings anew. At length one morning, just at sunrise, they beheld a small rocky island in the distance, and as they approached nearer saw huts and plantations and people walking about on the beach. Two of the natives presently launched a boat, guided it with great skill through the surf and rapidly approached the vessel, when, to the great surprise of all, one of the men said, in excellent English:

"Ahoy there! Throw us a line. We want to go aboard."

A line was thrown, and the two men, who appeared to be sturdy English sailors, came on board, being regarded with wonder by the men on the Sprite, who had only expected to see savages.

"What island is that?" asked Leon.

"That is Pitcairn Island," said one of the men.

"Pitcairn Island?" repeated Leon, for the famous islet was then little known. "I do not remember to have heard of it. Did you discover it? Where is it? How long have you lived here?"

It is in the Pacific Ocean, a thousand miles from Tahiti. I was born here twenty-four years ago."

"Twenty-four years ago? Were your parents wrecked here on the island?"

The young man then told Leon a most remarkable story, and one that far exceeded the strangeness of his own. He was the son of a man named Fletcher Christian, one of a number of sailors who had mutinied, seized the ship, put the captain and officers in an open boat, and then had sailed for Tahiti, afterwards going to this little island, destroying the vessel and marrying the Tahitian women they had taken with them.

"I have heard something of this story before," said Leon. "The ship was the *Bounty*, was it not, commanded by Captain Bligh, who was once with Captain Cook?"

"Yes," said the young man, "that was the vessel."

"And are any of the mutineers still alive?"

The young man remained silent, and Leon added:

"You need not be afraid. I am an American and the English are my enemies. It is not likely that I shall betray any of you."

Leon then went on shore and learned the strange history of the Pitcairn islanders.

"Then we were in the Pacific Ocean all the time," muttered Hal, "and we thought we were in the Atlantic. How we must have drifted and been buffeted about!"

From the islanders Leon obtained a chronometer and compass, neither of which were of use to them, but were of great value to the boy captain. By the aid of the instruments given him by the islanders Leon rounded Cape Horn and made his way north toward home, and although thousands of miles were to be traveled he was undaunted, for now he was no longer lost on a nameless sea, and had everything to look forward to.

CHAPTER XV.—Leon and Hal in Prison.

After a long, weary journey over thousands of miles of ocean, Leon at last sighted land. He ran into Rio Janeiro to refit and get more men, for now that he was nearing his own country he desired to be as strong as possible in the event of an engagement. The vessel was anchored in the harbor, and as soon as possible Leon and Hal went ashore, accompanied by Paul, Derrick and Hodge, in order to make all necessary arrangements.

Leon and Hal wore undress uniforms, with short swords at their sides, and might have been taken for officers of almost any European navy, while Paul was dressed simply, so as to attract little attention. They were crossing the principal public square in the city, when Leon suddenly saw among the crowd a young Frenchman whom he had known abroad a few years before and to whom he was greatly attached.

"Ah, my dear Etienne," he cried, pressing forward. "What lucky chance is it that brings you here? I am delighted to see you."

"Ah! it is the young American, my brave Leon," answered the other, pressing the young captain's hand warmly. "This is indeed a surprise. Your father is with you?"

"No, my father is dead. I am in the service of

the American navy, and these are my friends—Lieut. Hurry and young Monsieur Paul——"

"Be careful," whispered the young Frenchman, suddenly lowering his voice. "We must not speak French so near the palace of the king."

"And why?" asked Leon, speaking in English.

"The Emperor Napoleon made war on Portugal, their king came here for safety; all Frenchmen are hated here. They think I am a Spaniard, I am so dark. You speak that language?"

"Yes."

"It is well. I had not thought to warn you, our meeting was so sudden, but perhaps there is no harm done."

Darke Crenshawe was nearer than Hal supposed, was not more than four or five places behind, in fact, and had seen the meeting between Leon and the young Frenchman.

Leon and Etienne, Hal and Paul, crossed the square, and as they reached the other side Leon asked:

"By the way, Etienne, what is your business in Rio? Have you founded a college or——"

"Oh, no, but I am secretary to the bishop, and am still pursuing——"

"Secretary to the bishop!" cried Hal. "Then in mercy's name, procure us a license that we may get married. We were on the point of it a year ago, when our friends, the English, interfered."

Etienne looked puzzled, and Leon was about to explain, when Paul suddenly said in French:

"There goes the man who I think brought the English down upon us that day, your smiling cousin, captain."

Darke Crenshawe had passed within a few paces of them, and at a sudden opening of the crowd Paul had seen him and had spoken in French that Crenshawe might not understand. The latter spoke French, although Paul thought otherwise, and he understood perfectly what was said.

"Sh! be careful!" said the Frenchman. "That tongue is barred here."

"So, the brat does suspect, does he?" muttered Darke, as he hurried on. "I must take advantage of this. Once let me get the bishop's secretary out of the way, and my plan cannot fail of success."

"That is the one I spoke of as wishing to get a good share of Leon's property," said Hal. "He acts most suspiciously at times, and then so openly that no one can doubt his sincerity."

"But this postponed wedding—what about that?"

"I will tell you," said Leon. "and no doubt you can assist us."

They went to a little inn on a quiet, narrow street, and here, as they sat at table and enjoyed a frugal meal, Leon explained the circumstances to which Hal had alluded.

"I can help you," said the young Frenchman. "It is too late now, being after the noon hour, but to-morrow you shall be married. You must dine with me to-night at my quarters in the palace of the bishop, and I will see about the license. You will not fail, all three of you?"

"No," said Leon and Hal together.

"And my brave young friend, Monsieur Paul Dubois, you must come also. You are French, are you not?"

"I am an American, born in the United States," said Paul, proudly. "But you are right, monsieur

—I am French. My mother was of Paris, but she is so long dead that——"

"And you will come?" asked Etienne, seeing the tears standing in the boy's dark eyes.

"Yes, monsieur, I shall do myself the honor," answered Paul lightly.

Soon after this they parted in the plaza, and Etienne, forgetting his own caution, bade them a good-by in French, and hurried away.

Hardly had they gone ten paces, when Darke Crenshawe, stepping out from the shadow of a doorway, spoke a few words to an officer standing near. "Those are the spies of Napoleon; they are the men who would betray your ruler!"

"Never!" said the man, hurrying away.

Leon and his companions had barely reached the narrow street on the other side of the square before they were suddenly confronted by a sergeant and a file of soldiers.

"Senors, you are under arrest!"

"But what means——"

"Not a word, or my men will fire! To the prison!"

The soldiers closed in and surrounded the two officers, but in the confusion the boy slipped away.

In half an hour Leon and Hal found themselves in a closely barred cell, before the door of which paced an armed guard, and the one window of which looked out upon a deep gully, at the bottom of which flowed a foaming mountain torrent. Just before dark the guard swung open the door and put a jug of sour wine, some bread, and a dish containing some kind of meat stewed with herbs upon the stone bench at one side of the cell, and told them in Portuguese that there was their supper and they might eat it.

An hour passed, and the light of the rising moon was just beginning to penetrate their dungeon, when there was a noise of clanking chains and grating keys, and the great door was swung open, and there entered a man arrayed in priestly garments, accompanied by a boy wearing a long cloak. He had a small oil lamp with him, and this he placed on the stone bench as the door was closed. The instant the key turned the man caught up the lamp, threw back his cowl, and said:

"Hush! I have come to save you from a terrible fate."

The man was Darke Crenshawe.

CHAPTER XVI.—The Traitor at Work.

"You!" said Leon, in great surprise, springing to his feet.

"Yes," said the other, "I have come to help you to escape. I know that you suspect me of another purpose, cousin, but you wrong me."

"I have procured the means of escape, but you must use the utmost caution. This boy, whom the prison officials sent with me, will try to spy upon us, but fortunately he speaks no English. They would not let me come without him."

"Well, well; what is your plan?" asked Leon, nervously.

"You will ask to have a bed sent in, as the stones are too hard to lie upon. Two or three bundles of straw will be sent in, and, concealed in one, will be a long and strong rope and a file."

"Yes, and then?"

"You can cut through one of the bars and let yourself down by the rope to the bottom of the gully."

"And after that?"

"There is a swift-flowing stream below which runs to the sea. Throw yourself in and let it carry you down. Before long you will meet a boat with some of your men in it."

Hal, who paid little attention to what Drake said, but was watching the boy attentively, now saw the latter slowly remove the cloak from about his face and raise one hand in token of warning.

He was behind Darke and in the shadow, but as he advanced a pace the moonlight fell upon him. Then his face was revealed, and he formed one word with his lips, making no sound. The word was full of meaning, and from those lips could not fail to be impressive.

"Beware!"

The boy was Paul Dubois, the young cabin boy of the Sprite. Hal was astonished and would have betrayed himself, but Paul instantly fell back and began to mumble something in Spanish.

Darke turned quickly and looked at him, but his face was now in shadow and partly concealed by his cloak.

"Time presses," said Darke. "I must get away. One other thing. In case of some of the guards being at the windows, or upon the battlements below, it will be wise to send down a dummy figure at first and they will fire at it. You must let it fall, and they will think you dead."

Paul stepped forward, formed the same word of caution, and then mumbled in Spanish:

"The time is up: we were to stay but five minutes."

"Yes, yes," said Darke, in the same tongue, but with a decided accent and hesitatingly, "I am coming." Then in English: "Good-night, cousin; good-night, lieutenant; a pleasant journey to you both. Do not forget my instructions."

Then, taking up his lamp, he went out, followed by Paul, who turned for an instant and formed the words:

"Do not trust him!"

Then he, too, was gone, and the solid oaken door closed with a clash. Not until the echo of the footsteps outside had died away did either of the friends speak.

"Did you see who was with your cousin?" asked Hal.

"Yes; it was Paul."

"Did you catch what he meant to say?"

"Yes: It was, 'Do not trust him.' How came he with Crenshawe?"

"I do not know. He evidently has some plan of his own on foot. Before that, when you did not see him, he told me to beware. I do not think that Crenshawe knew that it was he."

"Then Paul must have seen Etienne. How comes it that Darke knew of our being arrested? Did you see him in the plaza at that time?"

"No, but I would not trust him. I have never liked the man. I think that he wishes to remove you that he may inherit your fortune."

"But how did he get into prison, and how did Paul manage to be with him?"

"I am as much in the dark as you are; but this I know, that we can trust Paul and there is a doubt about Drake Crenshawe. The boy is our

friend, but I am not at all sure about the other."

"You are right; and yet we may have done the man an injustice."

"I do not believe it. However, we can only wait."

An hour later, as they were sitting in the shadow, meditating upon their position, the door was opened. One of the guards entered, threw down two or three bundles of straw, and said:

"That is for the seniors' bed. The stones are hard and cold. Good-night."

When the man was gone and the door was again closed, Hal went to the bundles of straw and opened them.

"Ha! it is just as he said. Here is a long, stout rope," he muttered, "nicely concealed in one of the bundles."

"Nothing else?" asked Leon, who had not moved from the wall.

"Yes," said Hal, after a pause, "here is a file and—why, there are two, and one has a bit of paper wrapped about it. It must be a message."

"Read it," said Leon, briefly.

Hal took the scrap of paper to the window where the light of the moon could fall upon it, unfolded it and read:

"Do not make the attempt to-night. Darke meditates some treachery. What it is I have not learned. Remain quiet till I can communicate with you.—Paul."

"That is certainly to the point," said Leon, "and I think it will be well to follow the boy's advice."

"By all means," said Hal, as he proceeded to tear the paper into the smallest possible pieces, these he presently threw out of the grated window, watching them fall or float about in the breeze until they had all disappeared. He then returned to his seat on the bench, and for some time not a word was spoken.

"It is growing very dark," said Hal, at length. "I suppose the moon must have risen too high to shine in here. It seems colder, too."

"We shall not need the moon to sleep by," returned Leon, "but an extra cloak would have been acceptable. Was there nothing of the sort concealed in the straw?"

"I think not," said Hal, arising; "but I will look."

As he passed in front of the grated window he suddenly exclaimed:

"Ha! no wonder it has grown dark and cold. The sky is overcast with clouds and the wind has arisen. We are going to have a storm, and a severe one if I mistake not."

Even as he spoke there was a flash of lightning, followed a few moments later by a low, rumbling sound.

"It is still some distance off," muttered Leon.

"Yes, but it seems to——"

He was interrupted by a vivid flash, followed almost instantly by a tremendous peal.

"I thought it was traveling very rapidly," he muttered. "It comes from the sea, I take it, and seems to be heavy."

At that moment there was a flash that lighted up the whole of the cell, accompanied by a deafening crash of thunder.

"The sky is as black as ink, the wind blows

keen and cold, the air is damp, and I think we will have rain," said Hal, after a pause.

"Perhaps it will be better to make the attempt, after all," said Leon. "The darkness will aid us."

"But the lightning will betray us."

"Yes, but if it rains the lightning may cease."

Just then a great gust of wind came in at the window, and the patter of rain was heard. At the same moment the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled again, the storm having evidently increased in violence. It had come up very suddenly, but it showed no signs of abating, seeming rather to grow worse with each succeeding minute. The lightning became almost incessant, and the noise of the thunder was fairly deafening. One terrific peal succeeding another in swift succession. The rain beat in at the window in a perfect flood, and in a few minutes streams of water were running across the floor of the cell toward the floor.

"It's a perfect tropical storm," muttered Hal, "but it may not last long. If we only knew we might make the attempt, but I think that perhaps we had better take Paul's advice and wait," and he laid the file which he had taken up in his hand upon the window ledge.

"It is certainly a splendid opportunity," said Leon. "The boy could not have foreseen the storm, not could Darke. What treachery can he have meditated?"

"Posting men on the battlements and at the bottom of the cliff to fire upon us," said Hal, picking up the file again.

"But the storm will have driven them to shelter by this time, even if they had been posted so early."

Hal's reply was lost in the terrible report which followed with electric fluid, and even the solid stone walls seemed to shake with the awful crash that followed. Hal was thrown to the further side of the room, right against the door, while the tower itself seemed about to fall in pieces.

"Look, look! The bars have been wrenched from their places!" cried Hal. "The stones have fallen away. The tower has been struck by lightning."

In an instant a second bolt entered the place, attracted no doubt by the file which Hal had dropped, or by some jagged remnant of the broken bars. It was like a ball of living fire, and it sprang straight towards the door where Hal lay upon the stones. The room was full of smoke and flame in a moment, the very walls seemed about to fall in upon them, and for an instant they were dumb with terror. Then there was a crash, the stout door was torn from its hinges, and fell shivered and twisted upon the floor of the corridor opening a way of escape that they had not dreamed of.

Paul, had gone away at the time of the arrest in the public square, but he had followed behind his friends to the prison and heard Drake say to one of the guards that Leon and Hal would attempt to escape that night, and how it was to be managed. Paul then was enabled to insert the other file and note as the bundles of straw were taken to the two prisoners. Paul had seen the Bishop's secretary. Etienne, explained matters, and was given permission to attend to the spiritual wants of his friends. That is why we find him in the prison.

CHAPTER XVII.—The Scoundrel Unmasked.

A storm had suddenly burst with great violence over the prison. Paul sat in the round chamber downstairs, and was as much surprised as anyone at the sudden coming of the tempest. Darke and another of the guards whom Paul had not yet seen suddenly entered the room. In an instant the first man joined them, and they all sat on the bench running around the wall.

"This storm may defeat our plans," said one. "They will not make the attempt while it rages."

A peal of thunder heard even in the most remote dungeon of the prison reverberated through the place at that moment. Two or three more followed, and then there was heard the most fearful crash of all, and there was a general fear that the old prison would come tumbling about their ears.

"What a crash!" muttered Paul. "It must have struck one of—my God! they are in a tower. Perhaps that has been shattered!"

The faithful fellow hurried up the winding stone stairways, two steps at a bound. On the upper floor he suddenly met his friend, the sentry.

"Fly, my lad!" he cried. "The tower is old and crumbling. It has already been struck by lightning, and another shock will bring it down."

"I cannot go. I must see those poor men confined in the angle; perhaps they are injured—they may wish to confess," and Paul ran down the corridor like a deer.

He suddenly paused as two figures came out of a cell a few yards ahead.

"Captain!" he cried, springing forward. "You are not hurt? I feared that——"

"No, we are uninjured, but a great breach has been made in the wall of our cell, and the door torn out by the lightning."

"Back with you!" cried the boy. "I have learned the villain's secret. He is to have men posted below—they are there even now, and they have been instructed to fire upon you when you appear. Remain here. The guards are aroused. Some of them will be here—yes, they are coming."

The boy hid himself under the straw, close to the wall, and Leon and Hall sat down close to the breach in the wall as four or five guards suddenly entered.

"Ha! what is this? An escape? Give the alarm!"

"Your prisons are not proof against the elements, gentlemen," said Leon, quietly, "or else Heaven desires our escape. You see the exit the lightning has made?"

"Even that was not enough," said Hal, "for it tore the door down for us. Heaven has not willed that we remain here."

The superstitious fears of the men were aroused, and they began to think that these prisoners were indeed under the especial protection of Heaven, and that it was wrong to detain them here. One of the head jailers now appeared and ordered that the prisoners be transferred to another cell. The storm had been raging without all this time, seeming to gain rather than to lose in violence. At this moment there came a blinding flash, and the tower seemed about to fall. The

men fell back in great alarm as Paul sprang to his feet.

"Away, the place is doomed!" cried a voice, and jailer and guards fled precipitately as a heavy stone flew out into the corridor. Paul had thrown this himself, and as he now picked up the rope which Hal had left in one corner, he said:

"There is only a chance of escape, and it is this. Do you go first, captain. They will not fire, even if they are there. Then I will go and draw their fire, and——"

"No, we shall go together," said Leon. "You must not risk your life further!"

"Time presses," said Paul, making one end of the rope fast about a stone, which he first tested to see if it were firm.

He then threw the other out at the breach, and said:

"Quick! make the descent. I am safe here. I have that which protects me, and——"

"Ha! a spy—seize him!" cried a well-known voice, and at that instant Darke Crenshawe and a dozen guards, all bearing torches, appeared at the door of the cell.

"Seize that boy, he is a spy, he has come to deliver the prisoners, he is no novice, he is a spy. Seize him, and put all three in dungeons."

"Not yet, Darke Crenshawe," said Paul. "I know your plans and shall outwit you for all your pains."

Darke and the guards sprang into the room, but in an instant Paul had leaped through the breach in the wall, and was revealed for an instant by a lightning flash. In another moment he was gone.

"Away with them!" hissed Darke. "To the dungeons with them, and as for this boy, he will not escape."

The guards seized Leon and Hal, and the traitorous Drake sprang to the breach and gazed down into the darkness. Suddenly a sharp report was heard below.

"Ha! as I thought!" the traitor laughed. "That is the end of him!"

"No, for your men have obeyed your instructions and fired in the air!" cried Leon. "You see that we know your plans, villain."

"Away with them!" thundered Darke, with a look of fiercest hate upon his dark face.

CHAPTER XVIII.—A Perilous Journey.

Down, down, down amid the storm, clinging to his frail support went the gallant boy, the thunder sounding in his ears, the lightning blinding him, the rain wetting him to the skin. Down the rope he slid, now keeping from swinging against the rock by a motion of his foot, and again whirling around and around till he managed to stay himself with one hand. Suddenly, as he was nearly to the bottom, the lightning flashed and revealed a party of men on a battlement below. Then there was another flash, and a deafening report, the bullets whistling past his head and some striking against the rock.

"Thank Heaven I have escaped that," he murmured, but a greater danger is to come."

Then he glided rapidly down to the end of the rope and dropped into the water. He was swept

on by the current, the waters striking a chill to his very heart, and for an instant he thought that perhaps after all he would fail, and that his beloved captain would perish. Then he nerved himself, and as he was carried rapidly forward, thought only of the bright side, and assured himself that success was certain. On he swept past the wooded hills on the opposite bank, on and still on till the stream entered a narrow defile. He was floating now, for he wished to reserve his strength, and as he lay on his back he could see the dark sky above him, pierced at intervals by the lightning. Presently all was dark, and although he could hear the thunder he could not see the lightning. Turning over, he tried to pierce the darkness about him, but could see nothing. Then he shouted, and echoes sounded on every side. He was in an underground stream, surrounded by rocky walls, which had echoed the sound of his voice. The current seemed to be stronger than before, and he guided himself with hands and feet lest he should be dashed against some projection at a sudden turn of the stream. On and on he was carried, and suddenly, as he threw up one hand, it came in contact with something just above his head. The roof of the passage was growing lower. Before he was aware the passage might be entirely filled with water. As he thought of this a chill came over him, and he struck out bravely, finding that he still had a good supply of strength. It was not long before what he had feared became a reality.

The ceiling rapidly fell, till at last he was entirely submerged and floating through a sewer-like passage, the sides and top of which he could touch with his hands. The current was very swift here, but there was no knowing how small the passage might become at last; perhaps was too confined to allow even his slight form to pass through. Even if this were not the case it might be of so great length that his breath would be exhausted before he reached the end. He had filled his lungs well with air just before being submerged, but at the most he could not hope to remain without breathing for more than three minutes, and the required journey might occupy much more than that.

It was useless to attempt to return, for it would be impossible to breast the powerful tide that was sweeping him on. The current still bore him forward, but his strength was giving out, his head seemed ready to burst, and unless the open air were soon reached he would be drowned. Summoning all his remaining strength, he struck out vigorously and shot forward, suddenly finding himself in the open air with his head above water at the very moment that he was forced to open his mouth and release the breath in his lungs. It had been a narrow escape. A few moments only and he would have been strangled. He now found himself in a broad stream with low hills on either side, revealed occasionally by the lightning which still flashed, but not with the intensity that had formerly characterized it.

The rain descended in blinding sheets, but this mattered little, as he could scarcely see whether he was drifting in any even, and he had already passed through his greatest danger. He now allowed himself to float with the current, making no motion, but merely striving to reserve his strength, and paying no heed to where he was

going. Before long, however, he found that he was in the harbor, the lights on the ships being plainly visible. Then he looked about him, and at last, despite the darkness and the rain, made out the Sprite lying at anchor not more than three cables' lengths distant. He swam alongside and hailed the vessel in a low tone.

"What's that?" cried some one on deck.

"It is I, Paul. Throw me a line. I am nearly worn out."

A line was thrown, and the boy was speedily drawn on deck, where he hurriedly told his story and then hastened below to put on some dry clothes.

Derrick made him swallow a mouthful of strong spirits to take away the chill, and although the boy at first objected he finally consented. Then a party comprising more than half the crew went ashore, headed by Derrick, Hodge, and Paul himself.

"That villain may yet succeed in carrying out his infamous plot," said the boy, "and we must do all we can to prevent it. Let us go at once to the prison and demand that the captain be released."

"I'd like to train the guns of the Sprite on it and blow up the whole thing," muttered Derrick.

"But the Brazilians are our friends. We cannot do that," said Paul. "The king knows nothing of this villainy or he would not allow it. It is this Crenshawe who has bribed the prison officials to do his bidding, and no one knows what desperate plan he may attempt. Forward—there is not a moment to lose!"

CHAPTER XIX.—In the Nick of Time.

Leon and Paul were thrown into separate dungeons in the lowest vaults of the prison, loaded with chains and left in solitude. Being separated, they could not cheer each other nor give one another assistance, and the prospect looked black indeed. Hal was sitting on the floor of his dungeon, where he had been waiting more than two hours for some sign from the enemy, when there was heard the grating of bolts and bars, and the door was thrown open.

Darke Crenshawe entered, followed by an evil-looking fellow bearing a torch.

"Lieut. Hurry," said the villain, "I do not desire your life, and I will see that you go free upon one condition. You will either remain in this country or go to some other, as you please, but you are never to return to the United States, never to communicate with any one there—in fact, you are to be as one dead. What is your choice, exile or death?"

"Mr. Darke Crenshawe," said Hal, quietly, "you have shown your hand too late, for I know your plans, and I know that they will fail. You seek the fortune of your cousin, and will do anything to obtain it, but your schemes are known and will be thwarted at every turn. It is you who would do well to fly from this place, and not counsel me as to what I should do."

"Bah! You are powerless," laughed Darke. "You see this fellow? At a word he would fall upon and strangle you. It would be called an accident, and would be forgotten in a few hours."

"Beware," said Hal. "I care not if you kill me, but I will never forswear my country and friends at your bidding. I tell you that your race is nearly run, and that you had best look to your own safety. By this time the boy has reached the ship, and——"

"The boy is dead," laughed Darke. "His dead body was found on the rocks below the tower. The soldiers shot him at my command."

"It's a lie!" said Hal. "The men were to fire in the air first and then at us. Those were your commands. Paul has escaped and will bring help to us here."

"He can do nothing now," said Crenshawe, with an evil look. "Leon is dead, and——"

With a cry like that of an enraged wild beast Hal suddenly sprang to his feet, rushed to the end of his chain and struck at the villain with the shackles about his wrists.

"You have killed him? Then die yourself, hound!" he hissed.

Crenshawe fell to the floor bleeding from a cut in his forehead. He snarled out an order to the jailer, and the man rushed at Hal with a knife in his hand. The brave young fellow dashed the weapon from the man's grasp and struck him on the head, the fellow dropping his torch and rushing from the dungeon with a curse on his lips.

"Oh, you villain!" cried Hal, as he saw Darke crawl towards the door, the torch still giving light enough to enable him to see this much. "You dare not remove these fetters and meet me in fair combat. I would like nothing better than to run you through the body."

"Enough!" hissed Crenshawe, rising to his feet. "There is no alternative now. You shall die as your captain has died, and my triumph will be complete."

"It is a lie! Leon is not dead!" cried Hal. "You thought to blind me to your will by your falsehoods, but you are as false as Satan, and I would not believe you, though you swore it on the most sacred things. Begone, or I will yet burst these chains and kill you!"

"You will have little time to boast," snarled the villain. "I will soon send those here who will not scruple to do my bidding."

Then the door shut with a clang, the bolts shot into place, and Hal was left alone.

"The villain lies!" he murmured. "Paul is not dead, Leon is not dead. He means to get my promise and then to betray me. He would never let me leave this place alive. I would sooner die than renounce my name and country!"

For an hour he stood there, listening for any sound that might betray the approach of an enemy, tortured with doubt, hoping the best and yet fearing the worst. At last he heard footsteps, and presently the door was opened. Four guards appeared, and one of them said in Spanish:

"The time has now come. You are to die with your spy friend."

He said nothing, and a man entered the dungeon and removed his shackles. Then he was led out to a small outer court, where the prison walls towered high above his head, and where the sun never penetrated unless at noonday. It was in the gray of the morning, the storm had passed, and a few stars could be seen overhead. Hal was placed against the wall in an angle, and presently Leon was brought out and placed beside him.

"I knew you were still alive!" cried Hal. "That villain could not deceive me! What new plot is this? Surely, we are not to die without a trial—without having one chance for our lives?"

"Wait, my dear Hal," said Leon. "I have not yet given up hope."

Presently a file of men came out through a little door in the solid wall and faced them on the opposite side of the court. The men were armed with clumsy muskets of an antique pattern. In a moment two men advanced to pinion and blindfold the prisoners.

"Do you know what you are about to do?" cried Leon, in his own language. "We are Americans!"

"No, you are French," said the man, "the enemies of Portugal. You have conspired to overthrow our government and seize the country."

"It is false!" said Leon, in Spanish. "We are Americans, and if you commit this crime the whole world will cry out against you. Would you let us die without religious consolation? Where is the priest? We are not criminals, that you refuse us the last offices of the church. I demand that a priest be summoned."

The man shook his head, and was about to bind Leon's arms, when the young captain threw him off. Suddenly darting his hand into the inside pocket of his coat, he drew forth a paper and cried:

"Do you see this? Here is the great seal of the United States. I am an officer in its navy. Dare you commit this crime against an American? I know that you dare not!"

The man seemed to hesitate, and then he hurried away to consult with another standing in the doorway. Meanwhile the men with the muskets stood like so many statues, seeming utterly indifferent to everything. They were there simply to obey orders, and questions of nationality or the rights of citizens mean nothing to them. Suddenly the sound of a cannon was heard. A moment later Darke Crenshawe came into the court, his face inflamed with passion.

"Not yet?" he cried. "Why this delay? Did you not agree to——"

"The seniors are Americans; they claim our protection; we dare not risk the anger of a great nation like the Americans——"

"It is a lie! They are French; they are conspiring to overthrow——"

"But the young senior has his commission, stamped with the seal of the——"

"It is not his; he has stolen it; he is a villain!" cried Crenshawe. "Have you forgotten your word? Act now as an investigation will be too late. The United States are far away; they are engaged in a war with England; the claims of private citizens will receive but little attention. Remember, I promise you enormous wealth if you——"

"Attention!" cried the other, who seemed to be officer of the prison.

The men immediately stood upon guard.

"Take aim!"

A dozen muskets were raised to a level, all pointing at the doomed men opposite. Darke hurried from the place, but as he entered the passage he was suddenly thrown down and trampled over by a dozen men headed by a boy.

"Stop!" cried the boy, springing into the court. "Stop, in the name of the king!"

It was Paul Dubois, the brave young cabin boy of the Sprite. Behind him were Etienne, two priests, the governor of the prison, Derrick and half a dozen of the men of the gallant Spirit.

"Release these men!" cried the governor. "How dare you order an execution without a trial, without a priest? What right have you to act without orders in my absence, unless in dire emergency."

"Your excellency, the prisoners are spies of the French; they were in a plot to murder the king and——"

"It is false. They are Americans. You have been deceived, unless, as I suspect, you have lent yourself to the plots of as thorough a villain as ever walked in the hope of gain."

The officer turned pale, and quickly interposed.

"Surely, your excellency would not believe that anything I did?"

"I do not know," returned the governor, "but I intend to discover. You might have precipitated a war with one of the greatest nations in the world. Where is the villain who sought the lives of these young men? I will not let him depart till I learn——"

"He is dead, your excellency," said a guard who now appeared in the court.

"Dead?"

"Yes."

The face of the under officer of the prison assumed a relieved expression.

"But who has dared to take the matter into——"

"Pardon, your excellency, the man has taken his own life."

CHAPTER XX.—Conclusion.

It was indeed true that Darke Crenshawe had taken his own life when his schemes had failed of accomplishment. Fearing death at the hands of some of the crew of the Sprite, whom he had quickly recognized, or perhaps fearing that the very men he had sought to corrupt would betray him, he had plunged a dagger into his heart, and had ended his wicked life. They found him in the dungeon that had just been vacated by Leon when they went to search for him. His hand still grasped the deadly weapon, and his body was still warm, although death had followed swift and sure upon the stroke of the fatal steel. The body was buried in the prison yard, for Leon laid no claim to it. Although the man had deeply wronged him in life, and had sought to kill him, his body received a decent burial, and his private papers were taken care of in case any one wished to preserve them. To Paul all praise was given for his prompt action, for on that alone had depended the safety of Captain Leon and Hal. He had aroused Eti-

enne, the governor had been sent for from a province many miles off, and the royal edict had been secured, granting a trial to the prisoners, and all within a few hours.

"That boy will be a captain, perhaps a commodore one day," said Derrick. "The best of us could not have done so well."

"I did only my duty," said Paul, "and if necessary, would have given my life to save the captain."

"I know it," said Leon, "and I am indeed glad that the necessity did not arise. We had need for lives such as yours, my boy. I hope to see you an admiral one day, for you are worthy of the highest honors that can be given you."

The prisoners were liberated and proceeded at once to the vessel, escorted by a guard of honor. Isabel embraced Paul and kissed him, even before welcoming Leon on his return, and whispered to him alone:

"Brave young heart, it is not your captain's life alone that you have saved, but mine as well, for I should have died had he perished. I shall bear you in grateful remembrance all my life."

"My dear lady," said Paul, "it was for you I risked all—you as well as our captain. Had I failed I would have killed myself."

The reunion was a joyful one, and the boy captain was not only made happy by being restored to the lady of his choice, but was treated with the greatest honor by the king and court. That very day the double wedding, so long deferred, was solemnized with the utmost pomp in the great cathedral, with happy brides receiving the legal blessing. In a few days the Sprite sailed away from Rio, and was given a royal salute by the guns from the harbor and from the Brazilian war vessels lying at anchor. After a quick voyage the gallant little vessel arrived in American waters, and, finding that the war was not yet over, Leon put himself under orders once more, and did valiant service for his country till peace was declared. When the war was over and the country was once more at rest, he retired from active life for a time, and lived on a fine estate purchased with the fortune which now descended to him. He and his wife and children, brave Hal, and devoted Paul, have long since passed away, but their descendants still live, and those of Paul, who died a general in the army, never tire of telling of the stirring deeds enacted during the War of 1812, in which so gallant a part was played by the "Boy Privateer Captain."

Next week's issue will contain "THE BOYS IN BLUE; or, FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS OF CHER-RYVILLE."

CURRENT NEWS

**SCHOOLBOY POISONS HIMSELF WHEN
DENIED AN AUTOMOBILE**

Downhearted because his mother said she could not afford to buy him an automobile, Edward Cox, 19, captain of the Medina High School baseball team, Medina, Ohio, committed suicide by drinking poison.

After arguing the subject, Cox said to his mother: "You will be sorry." He then went out and is believed to have purchased the poison, drinking it on his return home.

EARTHQUAKE IN FRANCE

An earthquake at 3.32 p. m., Feb. 22, rocked buildings for ten seconds at Cauteres and other places in France. The walls of some buildings were cracked while doors were thrown open and furniture was broken.

The quake was particularly severe at Bagneres, where several buildings were badly shaken. Chimneys were thrown down and the populace fled in panic from their homes. Nobody was injured and property damage was relatively slight.

CAPTAIN KIDD, 1924

Piracy up to date, certified by the United States and Canadian governments, surely causes the uneasy spirits of Capt. William Kidd and Sir Henry Morgan to gaze with envious longing on the possibilities that lie outside the three-mile limit.

A pirate craft, though not flying the Jolly Roger, bore down upon a liquor-laden ship bound from St. John, N. B., to Bermuda, made her its prize, put the owner's agent in irons, won over the crew and steered for "Rum Row." There they are said to have disposed of 4,300 cases at \$30 a case, and with \$120,000 in legal tender sailed for parts unknown. Except that there was no bloodshed, the whole incident savors of the days of skull and crossbones.

In spite of all the romantic legends of pirate gold, it is questionable if Kidd or Morgan or any others of the 16th and 17th Century buccaneers and freebooters ever could boast that a single "business venture" had yielded booty that sold for \$120,000 in hard cash.

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— OR —

AROUND THE WORLD IN THIRTY-THREE DAYS

By WILLIAM WADE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued).

"Yes, but I don't think I ought to go on as long as I have missed that fellow, Mark. It is unfortunate after having made all this journey to have to fail at last."

"Keep on all the same, Dick. You'll have the honor of having beaten the record in an around-the-world trip, and that's worth thinking about. Besides, you don't know yet but that you may run across Ildone. Burns is not letting him get away if he can help it."

"No, I suppose not," said Dick, "but I wish I could learn something of his whereabouts. It would give me more encouragement to go on."

"Maybe we will," returned Mark, and then, having finished their purchases, they went out and took their way to the restaurant, where they were to have supper, having already engaged seats and berths on the express.

They were all ready to leave, and as the restaurant was in the railway station there would be no time lost in getting to the train when they were ready to go to the latter, and they enjoyed themselves thoroughly.

One of the brakemen was to call them in time for the train, but Mark did not depend upon him, evidently fearing that something might happen to interfere with their going if he did.

Dick knew when the train started as well as Mark, and he kept his eye on the clock, at length saying, with a start:

"That clock has stopped! What time are you?"

Mark took out his watch and said with a gasp:

"Hallo! Why, it's train time now! Come on. Where is that brakeman?"

Dick took out his watch and looked at it, finding that it was almost time for the train to go, and jumped up and helped Trix Renton to rise.

They all hurried out of the restaurant, having finished their supper, and ran toward the train entrance, hearing the guard shout:

"Express train for the East; all-board!"

"Here, hold on!" shouted Mark, as the trainman was about to slam the gates. "We're going on that train."

They all went through and got on board the train, Mark looking for the fellow who was going to call him, but seeing nothing of him.

Dick caught sight for a moment of Horace Ildone at one of the windows, the man quickly withdrawing his face.

He did not see Burns, and wondered if Horace had left him behind and how he managed it.

"Some folks are terrible slow," growled the porter, who shut the vestibule door after the travelers had entered their car.

"Yes, and some people would have been glad if we had missed the train," sputtered Mark. "Why were we not warned that it was time for us to leave, as we should have been?"

"Folks is never told de trains am goin', 'cept in de station," returned the man. "Wha' yo' 'spect?"

"Then why aren't the clocks kept going?" sputtered Mark.

"Donno nuffin' ab't it, sah," muttered the porter, and Dick saw that he did not.

"This is more of Horace Ildone's work," he said to himself. "He found out somehow that we were going on this train and has done his best to prevent us. I wonder how he got here himself? Well, he is in the United States now, and I can arrest him, and I am going to."

After they had been under way for half an hour, and with no liability of stopping short of another hour and a half, Dick started through the train to find the man.

He started toward the end of the train and went through the parlor cars, sleepers, and dining car till he came to the very end and stood on the platform of the rear car; but although he looked at every person he saw, he failed to recognize either Ildone or Burns.

If the latter had been on the train he would have spoken to Dick, but the man was not to be seen, and the young detective was not certain that he was there, not having seen him.

He had seen Ildone for an instant, however, and expected to see the man again, in disguise, perhaps, but thought that he would know him for all that.

He was not to be seen, however, and Dick looked as sharply as he dared at a number of men who looked as if they might possibly be the man in disguise, but failed to recognize him in any of them.

"It is very strange," he thought. "He could not have left the train nor could he have gone into one of the other coaches after we got on. The train was going then, and there would have been no chance. I'll look in the other cars."

Then he went back to where he had started, saw Mark, and said to him, in a quiet tone:

"I am sure that fellow is on the train, though how he got here I don't know. I have been to the very end, but have not seen him. Have you been forward?"

"No, I have not. Are you sure you saw him?"

"Yes, and I think he must have hired the brakeman not to call us and also stopped the clock in the dining-room. I am going to look in the other coaches."

"All right, but I don't believe you will find him. He would not go by this train if he saw you."

"He would if he was trying to keep us from going, wouldn't he? I am certain I saw him, although only for a moment."

"But we made the same mistake before."

"We did not; the police did. He is on this train, and I am going to find him if I go as far as the engine."

(To be continued.)

GOOD READING

WALLS MADE OF PAPER

A new building material made from waste paper and designed for ceilings and wall linings has been perfected by a Swedish engineer, and production on a large scale soon will be undertaken.

The raw materials are ordinary waste paper such as accumulates in cities, clay and sulphate lye, the cheapness of which warrants an inexpensive finished product. The covering is said to be fireproof and durable; can be applied by unskilled labor, will take paper paint or stain, and can even be polished. It is a good non-conductor, and does not respond to changes in temperature.

A NEW ELECTRIC SIREN

The little electric siren is only a few inches high but is little in size only, for the screech of the little red head is terrible. This is supposed to be an "indoor" size, but it would answer for a small town perfectly well. A steam or air siren is all right where pressure is obtainable day or night, but this is often difficult, while electricity is always available. The small size is only 10 inches high and is actuated by a one-twelfth horsepower motor. The relatively large rotor is surrounded with a wire screen to keep out birds and sleet and is equipped with a sheet metal roof which also serves as a sounding horn and distributes the warning in all directions. As a burglar alarm for banks, it is particularly useful as it may be sounded from any point. This siren has several elder brothers which are all right for outdoor use and render fire signalling easy.

TEMPLE OF GOLDEN CALF UNCOVERED BY EXCAVATORS

The Temple of the Golden Calf, mentioned in the Old Testament, has been found by the joint expedition of the University of Pennsylvania Museum and the British Museum near Ur of the Chaldees, Dr. George B. Gordon, director of the university museum, believes. He expressed the belief recently that Nebuchadnezzar's temple, which the expedition has uncovered, is identical with the Golden Calf Temple.

The Bible story of this temple, in the Book of Daniel, relates how three Israelite brothers, refusing to worship the golden image of a calf erected by King Nebuchadnezzar, were cast into a fiery furnace, but emerged unharmed. From photographs of the excavated temple and other data Dr. Gordon deduces that this temple is the one mentioned in the Bible.

IRON WITH A HISTORY

Several years ago a rusted leg iron was found near Snake Butte, four miles north of Pierre, S. D., and over which the Black and Yellow trail strikes north. Besides the leg iron was also found a file. The iron was placed in the State museum, although there was nothing of historic interest attached to it at the time, and even now the finder is unknown.

Recently Thomas Tuttle, an educated Yanktonnais Indian from Fort Thompson, was going through the State House looking at the relics in the museum, accompanied by an older Indian, Okasake—the Whipper—who was much interested in the collection. Okasake at once recognized the iron and told the dramatic circumstances surrounding it, as follows:

In the autumn of 1863 a scout camp of Yanktonnais in the Government employ was located near Snake Butte. One of the scouts was lying on the peak of the butte as a sentinel, and this man noticed some Indians approaching from the north. He watched the approaching Indians and soon discovered they were Santees, being Two Bull and his son and a nephew on a horse stealing exploit to the fort.

The Yanktonnais scouts spread out and captured the Santees, turned them over to the soldiers at Fort Sully and they were placed in irons. Soon afterward Two Bull's nephew escaped but blundered into the Yanktonnais camp at the butte and again was captured. A council was held and it was proposed to put the captured man to death, but it developed that he was a near relative of one of the scouts, therefore it was determined to set him at liberty.

The young man still wore the leg irons which had been put on him at the fort. He succeeded in removing them by driving the rivets with the aid of a file which he used as a punch. In his flight he dropped the irons where they were found years afterward.

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INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

SOMETHING TO KNOW

You will need a 50 ohm rheostat to use a UV199 or C299 tube with a six volt battery. In case you employ three volts, the ordinary 6 ohm rheostat can then be utilized.

The range of a crystal detector depends upon local conditions, size of antenna, etc. However, a good crystal set should receive music over a distance of about twenty miles. WD tubes function as detectors with about 22 volts plate voltage. When used as amplifiers 45 volts should be used.

SQUEALS IN ENGLAND, TOO

It has been generally understood in America that England is free from the squeals of re-radiating receivers, thanks to a law barring regenerative receivers unless operated with a stage of radio frequency as a "muffler." The *London Mail's* columns would indicate that this is not the case. Says the *Mail*: "The 'howling' of 'oscillation fiends' played havoc with Captain Eckersley's gears while he was endeavoring to bring in the U. S. A. broadcasting stations." This newspaper warns its readers that the law against the use of reaction (regeneration) directly coupled to the antenna is still in force.

WHO INVENTED THE THREE ELEMENT TUBE?

Dr. H. Preston Pratt has invented, according to news reports from Chicago, a new kind of three-element audion tube, and is planning to put it on the market. If the report is true, there promises to be a legal battle for honors and patent rights. To make the situation more interesting, Doctor Pratt claims that he, and not Dr. Lee DeForest, invented the three-element tube. Doctor Pratt says that he invented his first three-element tube in 1897.

For Doctor Pratt's new tube these claims are made: Less noise, no distortion, free from inductive and static disturbances, better reproductive capacity, greater volume, operates on from 1 to 150 plate voltage, consumes 1-30th of an ampere in current, long distance easily tuned, more rigid and more durable than present tubes, signal strength proportionate to plate voltage.

The Pratt tube contains two small cups, one on each end of the tube. Between these are a spiral filament, a spiral grid and a spiral plate. The reflectors (cups) are claimed to control the material particles, electrons, molecules and atoms which, Doctor Pratt says, are "running wild" in the present tubes.

The two reflecting surfaces concentrate the material particles in the center of the tube at the central spot, taking them away from the outer surface of the tube. From this central point these material particles complete the filament plate circuits of the tube."

TRANSFORMERS NOT STANDARDIZED

Audio frequency and radio frequency transformers take many shapes, but they all have four binding posts on them, two for the primary winding and two for the secondary. Different makes are often marked differently, and some are not even marked at all.

Although there is no standard system of labeling the posts, in most instruments the two primary ones are lettered "P" and "B."

This means that the former should go to the plate post of the tube whose output it is amplifying (either directly or through the phones, tickler coil, etc.), and the latter to the positive of the B battery, passing through the phones if these happen to be between the transformer and the filament. Sometimes the primary posts are marked "P1" and "P2," or just "1" "2," with the word "primary" between them. In this case the "P1" and "P2" correspond to the "P" and "B" respectively.

The secondary binding posts are usually indicated by the letter "G" and "F." The first goes directly to the grid post of the amplifying tube, while the second is brought to the negative side of the tube filament, preferably to the arm of the rheostat in the negative leg of the circuit. Sometimes the "F" is replaced by an "A" or a mere "—." Following the scheme used on the primary, the secondary is often marked "S1" and "S2."

If the transformer is not marked it is a simple matter to determine which windings are which. Select two posts and connect in series with them a single dry cell and a pair of phones. If the click is heard when the circuit is closed or open one of the windings has been found. Then change the wires to the other two posts and repeat the test. It will be found that the clicks obtained from one pair will be noticeably louder than those from the other. This pair of posts leads to the primary winding, the other to the secondary.

4,760 MILES BY RADIO RELAY

An unknown American radio operator situated in Tokio, Japan, recently sent a radio message to his mother at Cambridge, Ill., through amateur radio station 7HG, in that city, operated by Charles York, marking the first two way short wave communication across the Pacific Ocean. With only a fleeting contact, barely allowing time for the message to come through, York had considerable difficulty in distinguishing the foreign operator's call, JUPU.

While the signals of amateur transmitters in the United States have been reported by ship operators in remote sections of the Pacific and as distant as the island of Ceylon in the Indian Ocean, this incident is the first in which an amateur has worked both directions across the 4,760 mile stretch of ocean. The message was delivered via the American Radio Relay League traffic system.

The contact hardly had been made and the

message copied when communication was interrupted by heavy interference. It was about 1 a. m. when York heard a station on 200 meters and singing with the unfamiliar Japanese call. For a brief interval signals were good at both stations.

The station operated by York is situated on one of the highest hills in the surrounding country. He has done a great deal of long distance work, his best previous two way record being to communicate with Canadian amateur station 1AC, situated in Nova Scotia. He had also worked 6CEU in Hawaii and amateurs in every radio district in the United States with the exception of those in the second and fourth.

His antenna is supported by a 65-foot pole at the free end and a 4-foot pole at the lead in end. It is a six wire flat top 50 feet long with a counterpoise directly underneath.

RADIO FOG SIGNALS

Radio beacons serve as lighthouses except that they flash Hertzian waves instead of light beams. Each radio beacon has a characteristic signal, so a ship's operator can distinguish the different beacons, similar to the way navigators know lighthouses by the color of the light. A vessel equipped with a radio compass may determine its bearings from the radio beacons, although they may be invisible.

A radio fog signal has been established by the Bureau of Lighthouses on the Nantucket Light Station, Nantucket Shoals, Mass. The characteristic of the signal consists of a group of four dashes every thirty seconds. The Canadian Government has established a radio beacon on the Heath Point Lightship, off Heath Point, Gulf of St. Lawrence. The station transmits on 1,000 meters with a spark of frequency of 500 cycles. The characteristic signal of this station is a series of groups of four dashes broadcast for sixty seconds, followed by a silent interval of four minutes. The elapsed time from the beginning of one group of dashes to the beginning of the next group of four seconds.

All radio beacons transmit on the 1,000-meter wave length, but all requests to radio compass stations for bearings or positions should be made on 600 meters. Radio beacons operate continuously during foggy weather, and in clear weather daily from 9 to 9:30 a. m. and from 3 to 3:30 p. m.

Other radio beacons now in operation by the United States Lighthouse Service are: Fire Island Light Vessel, New York—Groups of two dashes for twenty-five seconds; silent twenty-five seconds. Ambrose Channel Light Vessel, New Jersey—Signal dashes for twenty seconds; silent twenty seconds. Sea Girt Light Station, New Jersey—Groups of three dashes for sixty seconds; silent sixty seconds. Cape Henry Light Station, Virginia—Groups of two dots followed by one dash of twenty seconds; silent fifteen seconds. Diamond Shoals Light Vessel, North Carolina—Groups of two dashes for thirty seconds; silent thirty seconds. San Francisco Light Vessel—Groups of two dashes for thirty seconds; silent thirty seconds. Blunts Reef Light Vessel—Single dashes for thirty seconds; silent thirty seconds.

The Leviathan was recently equipped with a new radio compass which will enable the navigators to know the exact position in foggy weather after the ship is within 150 miles of Nantucket Light.

AMATEURS COVER THE WORLD

To the radio amateur the letter DX call up a vision of immeasurable distance that would have made our ox cart pioneers and forefathers blink in amazement, but is now easily obliterated with the pressure of fingers on a brass key. This business of "packing up the old kit bag" for the sake of the wanderlust that is in all of us now has, through radio, a modern version that does not require the lifting of a foot over one's doorstep. That is the major fascination in the wonderful game of amateur radio, the thrill that comes with each new conquest over space and time, ability to reach the ends of the world.

You read on every hand how the possession of a receiving set from the simple single circuit tuner to the latest model superheterodyne brings "the world into the home," but seldom have you read how easily a radio transmitter can take you out into the world.

For a little more than the same amount of effort that it would take you to equip your home with a radio receiving set, you can install a telegraph code transmitter. Sixteen thousand young men have done that in this country. It all started with the neighborhood line telegraph, but it ended in 1923 by making amateurs of the world neighbors.

It is remarkable when one realizes the odds that have been encountered and the technical obstacles that have been overcome by a comparatively small group of experimenters in this modern winning over the space. It is comparable only to the heart-breaking efforts of those who have in years gone by in giving us the little office globe that we can twirl with a movement of the hand and put our finger on every country and city of any consequence on the earth. Just as surely as undiscovered territory was won over by the pioneers, so is the art of amateur radio making international citizen radio a reality.

In the interval of a few years since members of the Radio Club of Hartford, Conn., were considering as a great triumph code transmissions over a distance of thirty miles, these amateurs have communicated direct with amateurs on the West coast, and their transmitters are heard frequently in Europe. Interest in amateur radio is keen in New Zealand, Australia and some parts of the South American and African continents, giving promise of the day when amateur radio will have put its foot on every natural barrier.

Canadian amateurs are sending messages across the continent. The Australians have rubbed elbows with California. The island of New Zealand is one of the latest entrants into the world amateur fellowship without legal bonds and tugging for greater contact, a louder CW twang and a whole lot more punch to the DX. The American Radio Relay League is bringing together amateur transmitters all over the world.

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NEW YORK, MARCH 26, 1924

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

ELEPHANT THROWS PASSENGERS IN PANIC

The old adage that "an elephant never forgets" is worrying officials of a circus company wintering at Havre de Grace, Md.

For two years they have been trying to make "Chief," their biggest elephant, forget how to pull the emergency air brake cord on railway trains. Recently, while he and some of his brothers were en route from Philadelphia to Havre de Grace in what is known as an automobile car, attached to a Pennsylvania line accommodation train, "Chief" wrapped his trunk around the cord and gave a hard pull.

Passengers were thrown from their seats and were almost panic-stricken.

After the train reached Havre de Grace it was revealed that "Chief" had done the same thing three times two years ago while on his way to Syracuse.

157,000 WORK FOR FORD

Employment in the Ford Motor Company's organization, it was announced recently, is now at the highest point in its history. The total number of employees in all of the Ford plants in the United States is approximately 157,000.

The largest number in any single manufacturing units is at the Highland Park plant at Detroit, where 68,500 men are at work.

Other manufacturing units, including the Lincoln car plant at Detroit, and the plants at Kearny, N. J.; Hamilton, Ohio; Green Island, N. Y.; Glassmere, Pa., and Poughkeepsie, N. Y., employ close to 11,000 men.

More than 4,000 men are at work on the company's timber and iron ore properties in the upper peninsula of Michigan. Ford coals mines in Kentucky and West Virginia are giving employment to more than 3,500 men, and the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton, the Ford railroad, employs in excess of 2,500 men.

In addition there are about 700 employees in the Henry Ford hospital at Detroit and more than 700 in the Henry Ford Trade School at Highland Park.

GULLED

A sea gull with a splinter of wood at least six inches long, that had entered the breast and was protruding through the back between the wings, was the startling spectacle that greeted a crowd of visitors on the Pine avenue pier, Los Angeles, Cal. A physician who was among the spectators declared it to be a novelty among novelties in bird life, for the wound caused by the shaft of wood had been apparently healed and the splinter had become a permanent part of the gull's anatomy.

The bird was captured for examination and the physician expressed the opinion that the sea gull would probably die from blood poisoning if an attempt were made to remove the wooden shaft. It is probable, old timers on the pier declared, that the gull, a clumsy, awkward bird, had collided with a splintered board while attempting to land on some old pier or shed along the water front and, after being wounded, had stowed itself away to nurse its injuries.

The wooden splinter does not, apparently, interfere with the sea gull's flying apparatus.

LAUGHS

Magistrate—Last time you were here I told you I hoped never to see you again. Delinquent—Yes, sir, I know, sir—but I couldn't get the officer to believe me.

Mary—What did the specialist say about Mrs. De Vere's frightful attack of kleptomania? Mabel—Oh, he said she must take things more quietly in future.

Friend—How does it happen that you have so many Japanese things in your room? Young Wife—Just before I married the contents of a Japanese shop were sold by auction. All these things are wedding presents.

First Gossip—So you was niver axed to the funeral? Second Gossip—Nivver as much as inside the house. But you just wait till we hev a funeral of our own an' we'll show 'em!

A judge who was not renowned for intellect said angrily to counsel: "All you are saying is beyond the point. I pay no heed to it. It simply goes in at one ear and out at the other." "Well, what is there to prevent it, me lud?" retorted the counsel.

"Will you give me a character?" asked the lazy one. The employer sat down to write a non-committal letter. His effort resulted as follows: "The bearer of this letter has worked for me one week, and I am satisfied."

The telephone in a well-known surgeon's office rang and the doctor answered it. A voice inquired, "Who is this?" The doctor readily recognized the voice of his 7-year-old son. Although an exceedingly busy man, he was always ready for a bit of fun, so he replied: "The smartest man in the world." "I beg your pardon," said the boy. "I have the wrong number."

BRIEF BUT POINTED

HAWAII NATIONAL PARK

The Department of the Interior has just issued for free distribution a 16-page illustrated booklet on Hawaii National Park, which is described as a playground of easily accessible marvels available 365 days in the year. The booklet describes the various park trips from the city of Honolulu. The park is comprised of three separate areas, two of which are on the island of Hawaii, the third being on the island of Maui; this latter, the Haleakala section, contains the largest extinct volcano in the world within the crater of which it is said could be placed the city of Philadelphia. The Kilauea section contains the famous "Lake of Everlasting Fire," which is so convenient of approach that automobiles are driven to the brink of the pit. The Mauna Loa section includes the huge crater of Mokuaweoweo at the summit of Mauna Loa, altitude 13,675 feet. The Mauna Loa trip is described as a three-day riding or hiking excursion from the Kilauea Volcano and it is said the lava formations provide a variation of interests that more than rewards one for the rather strenuous climb. Copies of the Hawaii Park booklet may be obtained by addressing the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C.

SLAYERS COW WARDEN AND FLEE DEATH CELL

Emery Connell and Joe Sullivan, convicted of murder in connection with the slaying of two Little Rock detectives, and Eulos Sullivan, under sentence to be electrocuted soon for the killing of J. Walter Casey, a United States Deputy Marshal, escaped from death cells at the Arkansas Penitentiary recently.

They held up Warden Martin and his nephew, R. M. Haskins of Kansas City, when Martin and Haskins went to the men's cell with their breakfast.

Martin and Haskins were covered with pistols by the three prisoners who previously had helped up an armed guard and locked him in a cell.

Haskins was locked in a cell and Martin forced to lead the way to his automobile in the prison yard. The three men got in and forced the warden to drive through the prison gates, where the trusty guard recognized him and passed him readily.

The warden drove a mile from the prison, then the three men put him out and sped on toward the city. Warden Martin telephoned an alarm, and all available police are patrolling roads leading out of the city.

HEROES OF QUEBEC

At the siege of Quebec, Captain Ochterlony and Lieutenant Peyton, both of General Monckton's regiment, fell before the breastworks near the falls; the former mortally wounded, the latter severely in the knee. Two savages pushed down upon them with the utmost precipitation, armed with knives. They first seized on Captain Ochterlony, when Lieutenant Peyton, who lay re-

clining on his fusée, discharged it, and the savage dropped immediately on the body of his intended prey. The other savage advanced with much eagerness to Lieutenant Peyton, who had scarcely time to disengage his bayonet, and conceal its disposition. With one arm he warded off the proposed blow, and with the other laid the assailant lifeless at his side. A straggling grenadier, who had happily escaped the slaughter of his companions, stumbled upon Captain Ochterlony, and readily offered him his services. The captain, with a spirit and bravery of a true Briton, replied: "Friend, I thank you, but with respect to me, the musket or scalping knife will only be a more speedy deliverance from pain. I have but a few minutes to live. Go; make haste, and tender your services where there is a possibility it may be useful." At the same time he pointed to Lieutenant Peyton, who was then endeavoring to crawl away on the sand. The grenadier took Lieutenant Peyton on his back, and conveyed him to a boat, but not without each receiving a wound.

NAVY AVIATORS TELL OF PERILS IN JUNGLE

Details of the adventure in which Lieutenant H. S. Wooster and J. J. Dimshock, chief machinist's mate, navy aviators, who took part in the recent manoeuvres in Caribbean waters, nearly lost their lives in tropical jungles, are contained in a report which has just reached the Bureau of Aeronautics.

Piloting torpedo and bombing planes and accompanied by mechanics, they were detailed to make a photographic reconnaissance in a flight across the Isthmus of Panama. The planes became separated in a cloud bank close to the mountain peaks on the Pacific side of the Isthmus.

Lieutenant Tate returned to the Langley on schedule, but Lieutenant Wooster and Dimshock remained unaccounted for after the time had expired in which their fuel supply would have been exhausted. A search for them was continued for four days.

A relief party was landed from the Langley and natives were enlisted in the search, while airplanes also engaged in the hunt. Wooster and his assistant were flying close to the mountain peaks of Pinola Pass when overtaken by a violent rain squall. By skilful handling of the airplane they landed in the treetops of a jungle forest; but they were hurled out, and the plane was demolished. Dimshock sustained painful minor injuries.

The emergency rations carried by all planes in manoeuvres, consisting of a few cakes of chocolate and a can of navy beans, were salvaged from the wreckage and the aviators started to make their way out of the jungle. Three days and three nights in the wilds of Panama on starvation rations intervened before they were able to reach David, on the Pacific side of the Isthmus, where the news of their safe arrival was relayed to the naval authorities.

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

COUNTING WOMEN'S NOSES NEW GAME

Counting the noses of society women is the latest pastime around the tables at Monte Carlo and in the most fashionable restaurants on the Riviera. The idea developed from the discovery that scores of prominent visitors this winter were showing unmistakable signs of being addicted to cocaine sniffing.

The first indication of this is a noticeable contracting of the small muscles on both sides of the nose which even massage and beauty plasters cannot conceal. When the habit is well established the nasal opening assumes an unhealthy red hue and the habit is further betrayed by a constant scratching of the nose. As a result non-users of the drug find the detecting of sniffers just as interesting as was the English beaver game last winter.

Nearly 200,000 packets of vegetable and flower seeds are now being distributed by the Brooklyn Botanical Garden to the boys and girls of Brooklyn. Among the flower seeds there are sweet alyssum, aster, calendula, cornflower or bachelor's button, dianthus, dwarf and tall marigolds, morning glory, dwarf and tall nasturtiums, phlox, sunflower, verbena and zinnia. Beans, beets, carrots, kohlrabi, lettuce, onions, radishes, sweet corn, tomato and turnips are on the list of vegetables. This is tested seed, which, if given fair treatment, cannot fail to grow. It is being distributed through the schools.

Last year the Garden distributed 170,413 packets to the Brooklyn school children. A charge of 2 cents a packet is made. The work of putting up the packages is in charge of Miss Maude Hickok, instructor, under the general supervision of Miss Ellen Eddy Shaw, curator of elementary instruction.

THE WILD CATFISH OF THE ANDES

The catfish of the Andes is another member of the finny family able to propel itself along out of the water and ascend rocks, and still another specimen of catfish is found in Egypt which, like its South American brother, breathes comfortably out of water and spends much of its time on dry land. According to John T. Nichols, Curator of Fishes at the American Museum of Natural History, these climbing fish and other members of the fish family that spend considerable time out of water have a large spongy substance just under their gills.

"The gill structure of this group functions in the air as well as in the water," said Mr. Nichols. "In tropical countries, where the water gets hot, the fish cannot get the oxygen they need in rivers and creeks, so they leave the water, sometimes for quite long periods of time. In most fish the spongy substance under the gills collapses as soon as the air touches it and ceases to function."

Mr. Nichols said many well-known authorities had written on climbing fish, which were not at all uncommon in many countries.

An observer of the habits of the climbing cat-

fish in Colombia, South America, where the torrential character of the rivers makes going against the current an almost impossible feat, even for a fish, tells of the well-developed breast muscles by means of which the catfish propels itself along over the rocks.

"Under usual conditions," said this authority, "they are clumsy and awkward swimmers, wriggling through the water like tadpoles, but as creepers and climbers they are without rivals in the fish family." And he adds, after a paragraph on watching a finny family scrambling over the rocks to get out of the way of the current: "The total vertical distance through which the fish climbed measured eighteen feet. When undisturbed they covered the distance without a fall."

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Let me send you my big free book giving details of the opportunities electricity offers you and a sample lesson also free. Mail the coupon and get this at once.

Learn how other men "got themselves ready to hold good paying jobs" and how I can help you do the same. This is your big chance—take it.

L. L. Cooke
Chief Engineer, Chicago
Engineering Works,
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Dear Sir: Send at once Sample Lessons, your Big Book, and full particulars of your Free Outfit and Home Study Course—all fully prepaid without obligation on my part.

W. E. Pence
in his working togs



Chehalis, Wash.,
Oct. 9, 1921

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A NEW THEORY OF THE ORIGIN OF MERCURY

The origin of the planet Mercury has been to some degree a puzzle to scientists for some time. A recently promulgated theory, which European scientists pronounced "daring, but rather attractive," states that Mercury was once part of the planet Venus.

According to Darwin's theory, the moon was once a part of the earth, and was torn off during a time of high solar tides, which increased the sun's attracting power enormously. Venus and the earth are nearly alike in size, but Venus is much nearer the sun, and if a similar disruption took place the displaced part would be larger than our moon and be torn off with more force—so much so that it would escape from its mother planet's attraction entirely and fall into an independent orbit of its own around the sun.

The fact that Mercury has a long rotation period tends to support this. Another thing which lends its support to the idea is the fact that the whiteness of Mercury and that of the moon are nearly alike in degree — their "albedoes," to put it in scientific language, are practically similar.

RING STOLEN BY CAPT. KIDD FOUND ON SOUND BEACH

A curiously shaped gold ring, said once to have been a part of the jewels of a British King, and which tallies in detail with one which disappeared from the English court in 1610 and since has been listed on the records as of unknown whereabouts, was found by Charles Burns of the local Fire Department in the sand near Thimble Islands, Conn.

Thimble Islands long have been noted as a rendezvous of Capt. Kidd, and it is believed the ring was a part of the treasure loot of the pirate, who, according to legends, buried his spoils in this vicinity.

History states that the nearest resemblance to the ring was worn by Lady Catherine Grey, and it is said to have signified her marriage with the Earl of Hertford. Queen Elizabeth, displeased with the union, sent Hertford to the Tower of London in confinement and subjected Lady Catherine to many hardships.

Burns has deposited the ring in a safe deposit vault and has refused an offer of \$2,000 for it. He says he intends to make a further search of the beach in hope of uncovering other trinkets.




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